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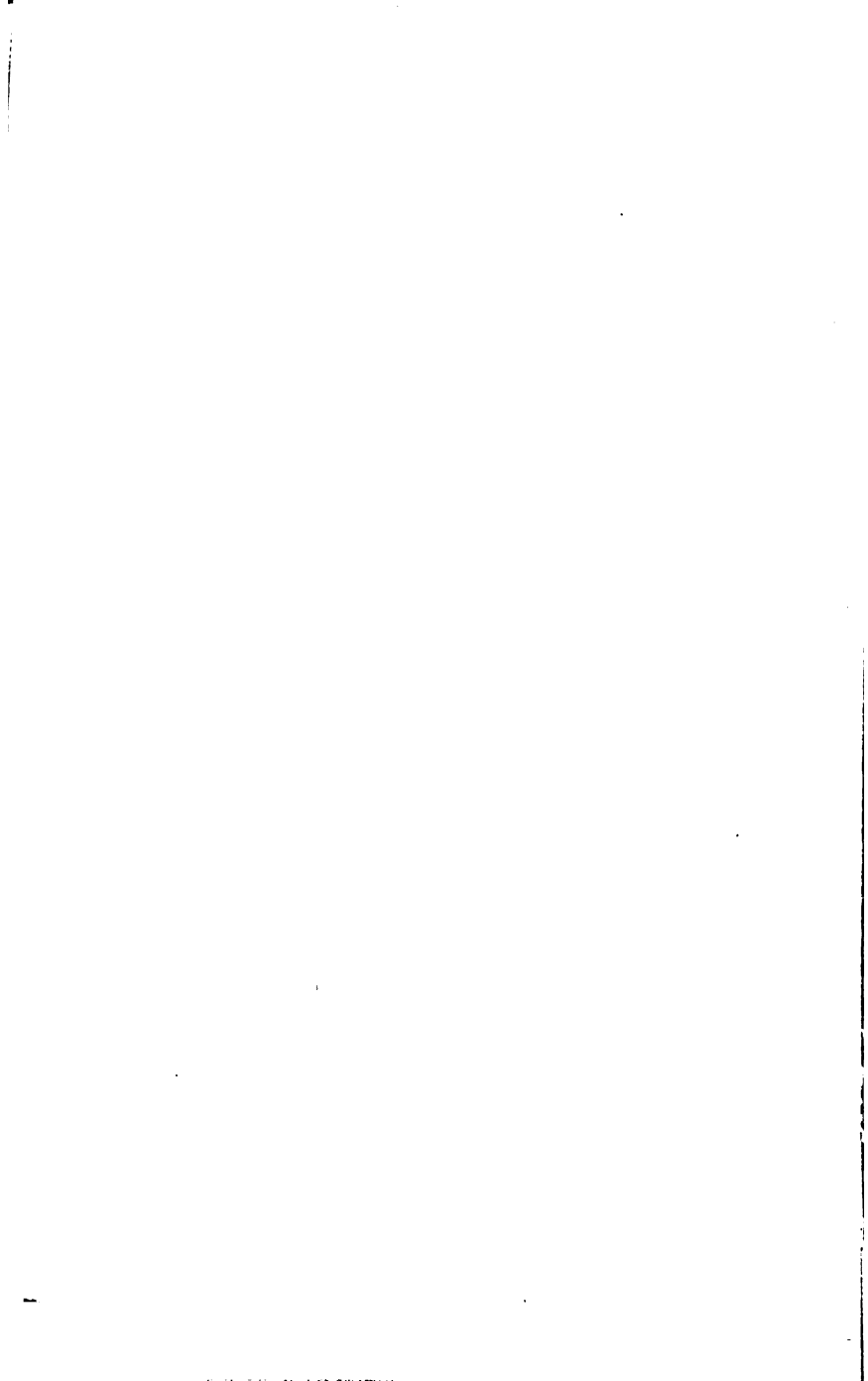
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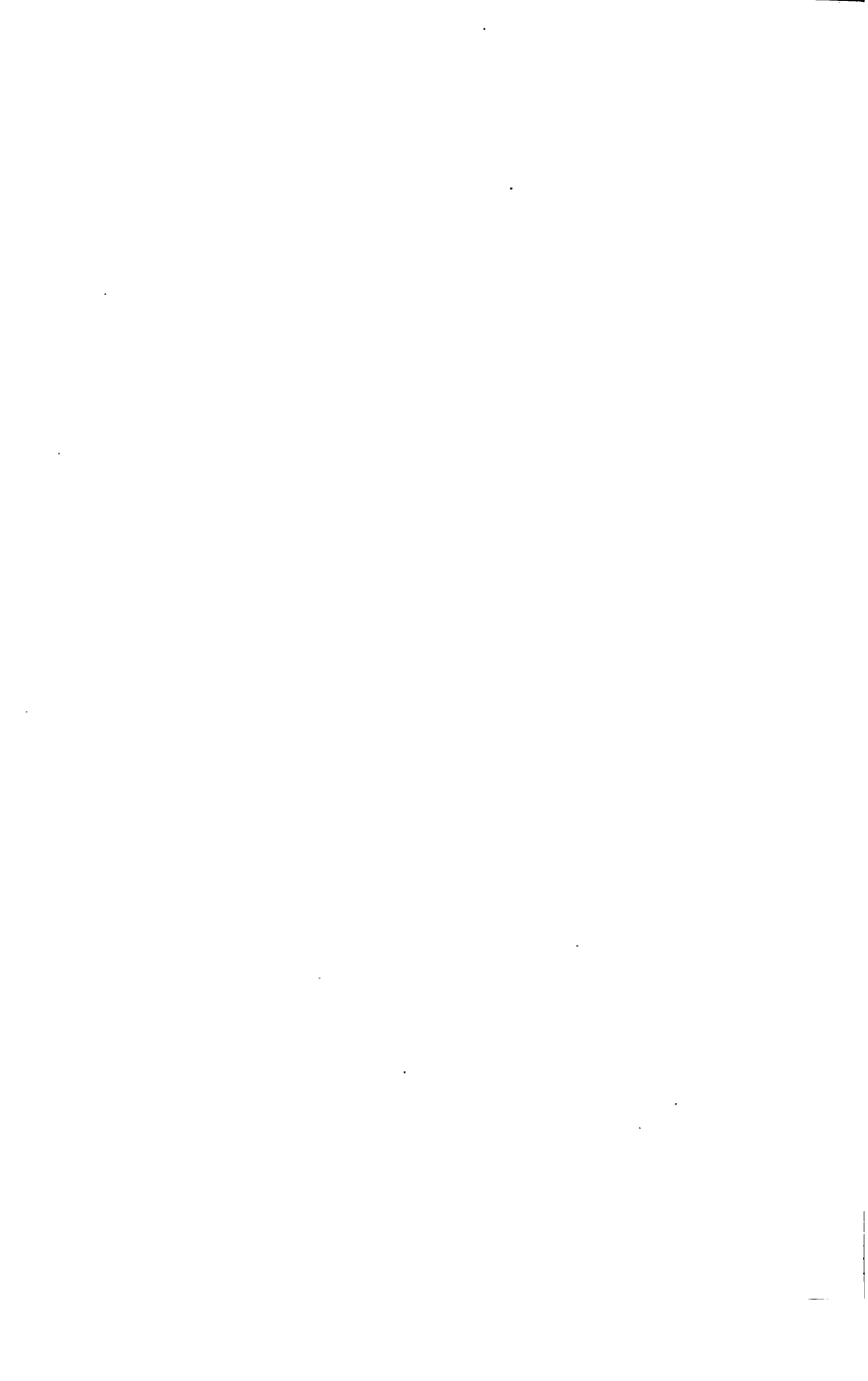
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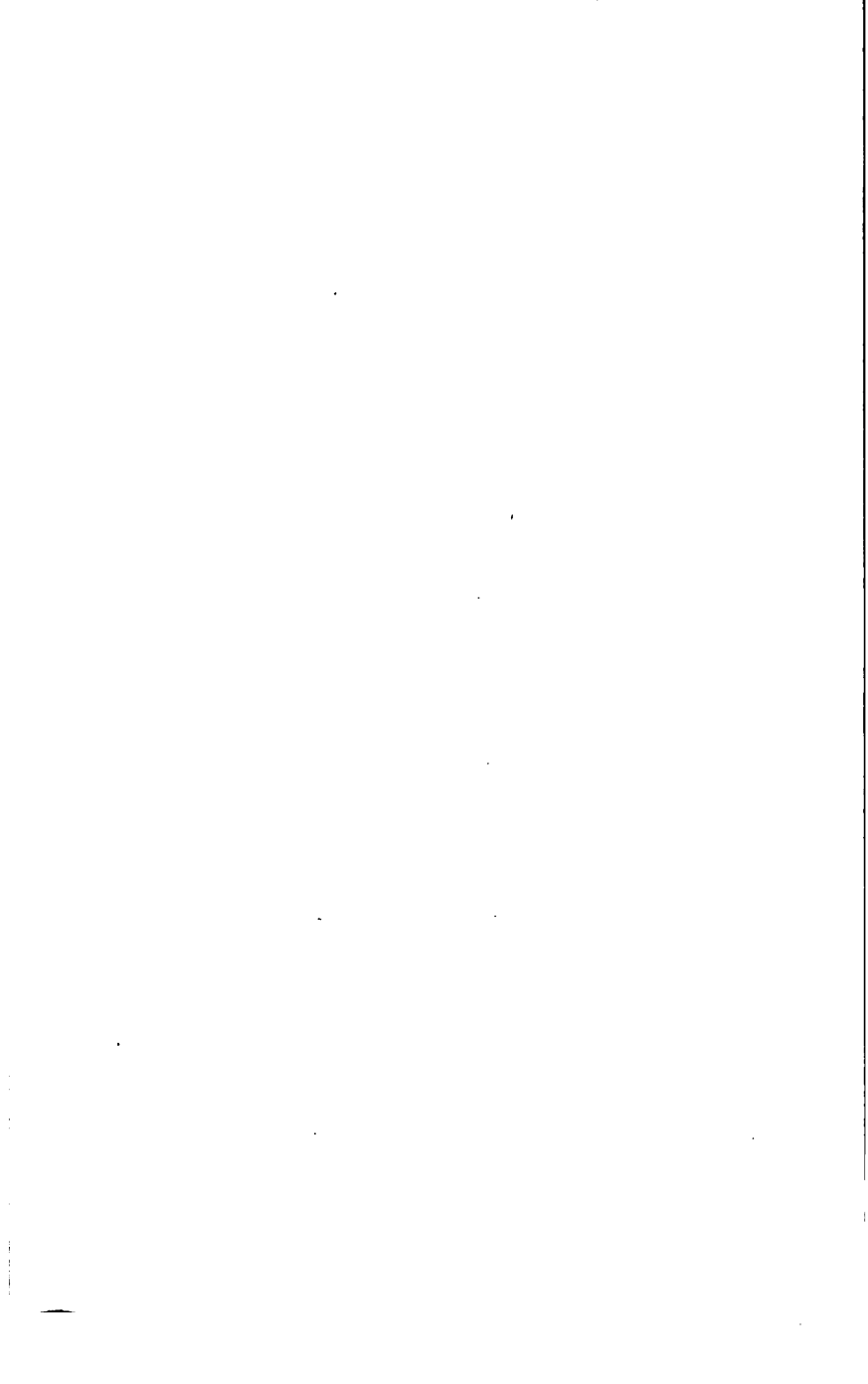


The Workers' Bookshelf



**JOINING IN PUBLIC
DISCUSSION**

ALFRED DWIGHT SHEFFIELD



JOINING IN PUBLIC DISCUSSION

A STUDY OF EFFECTIVE SPEECHMAKING

*For Members of Labor Unions, Conferences, Forums,
and Other Discussion Groups*

BY

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT DISCUSSION AIMS TO DO

Every man (and woman too) with an ambition for self-betterment should give a thought to his possibilities of influence. As years go on he can gain the knack of turning his knowledge into earning-power, and thereby add to his comforts, without adding much to his standing among men. But if he gains the art of transmuting his experience into influence, he does more than "better his conditions": he "makes the most of himself," and this is a gain for everybody about him. It makes him a spokesman ~~for ideas~~ and consequently an asset to every organization which has a stake in seeing right ideas prevail.

There has never been a time when the influence of working men and women could count for so much as it can count to-day. Organized labor has passed the stage of mere collective bargaining over hours and pay. Its forward-looking leadership is now taking heed of that greatest waste-product of modern industry—the unused talents of its workers. These talents it means to enlist in constructive policies—

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policies that must be shaped to the advantage of wage-earners by their own right thinking. Every trade-unionist, therefore, is a possible spokesman for progressive ideas in his own group. Thousands of men and women are sitting silent in labor meetings who, with a little training, would find their voices and their true rôles as contributors to labor's counsels. It is the aim of this little book to give them a self-starter towards influential speaking.

NOT "AUDIENCE" BUT "DISCUSSION-GROUP" IS THE
POWER PLANT FOR INFLUENCE

The first move in self-cultivation for speaking power is to turn one's thought outward from one's self to the group of people among whom one is to speak. This takes an effort of will. A man's ambition to speak tempts his mind to picture the group as a passive audience with himself in action before it as a platform orator. That picture is a "wishful day-dream," beguiling his attention away from the realities of his problem. An orator, indeed, he may some day become, but that will be only as a by-product of another mastery, more important in modern organized groups than oratory. He must begin mastering the technique of *discussion*—by which the whole group is maneuvered into co-operative thinking and speaking. The real technicians of modern democracy are those who win insight into the forces of thought and feeling that can be touched into ac-

tivity when people sit down together. The student of discussion, therefore, should picture a deliberative meeting as a sort of field of magnetic forces wherein his mind can conspire with other minds to organize socially advantageous currents. His speaking is ideally influential when it precipitates a general mood to create an understanding.

Such an aim for those who join in public discussion will perhaps be questioned. Some may ask whether ideally an organized group should not have its thinking done individually by its ablest minds beforehand, and devote its meetings to the business of getting the thought of its leaders indorsed by the will of all. Thinking, one would suppose, calls for both the expert mind and a condition of undisturbed concentration,—and concentration upon a problem seems hardly the characteristic attitude of a meeting. Its deliberations, indeed, are subject to certain gusts of impulse that we distrust as “crowd psychology.” Why not aim, then, to develop the discussion-group simply as a “will-organization” in which the best thought-leadership shall prevail?

Two considerations disallow such an ideal. First, the discussion group will deteriorate, once it regards itself as made up of leaders and mere followers. If its thinking is to be done for it by semi-official experts, nobody else need feel responsible for its resourcefulness in suggestions. Secondly, any solution of a controversy which is really to prevail in a prac-

tical sense must get from the group something more than a majority assent. It must take up into itself most of the emotional forces that have centered in the differing ideas represented in the group. Otherwise the solution will embody ideas that are charged with the action-tendencies only of the experts—not of the whole group that is to carry it out.

GROUP THINKING POOLS THE IDEAS OF ALL FOR THE
INSPIRATION OF EACH

Both these considerations should be looked at a little closer. The first one looks to "concerted" thinking as an activity with a worth of its own, not to be belittled in a contrast with "solo" thinking. As will be shown later (p. 154ff), the group of thinkers in concert is not inevitably subject to "crowd psychology." And for the thought-process the group has certain actual advantages as well as disabilities. The thought-process, as described by John Dewey,¹ runs through a cycle, in which appear (1) a problem raised by disturbing facts; (2) an idea suggested as key to it; (3) the development of that idea's leadings. At the first stage, where concentration is a requisite, "solo" thinking has the advantage. But at the second and third stages the special requisite is that a variety of promising ideas shall come to mind. Here, as Graham Wallas has pointed out,² group

¹ *How We Think*, pp. 72-77.

² *In The Great Society*, chapter xi. "The Organization of Thought," p. 245.

thinking has the advantage of a greatly extended range of mental associations. "In individual thought the thinker waits (in the problem-attitude) till some promising idea comes into his mind, and then dwells on it till further ideas spring from it. A group of people, however, engaged in dialectic, can, like a pack of hounds, follow up the most promising idea that occurs to any one of them." Suggestions that merely seem plausible at first may thus have their unfit consequences promptly traced out, whereas suggestions that at first seem without profitable bearings may get from one and another in the group a development that transforms them into ideas recognizably apt and fruitful. The whole process, too, will get in the group a constant testing of its ideas by the atmosphere of the discussion,—by the instinctive value-comments, too delicate for words, that play about the subject in eager tones, embarrassed silences, quizzical smiles, and the turn of eyes.

NOT "MAJORITY WIN" NOR COMPROMISE BUT
"CONSENSUS" THE IDEAL AIM

The second consideration,—that the solution of a controversy should in some measure *harmonize* the differing ideas advocated—commits us to a new view of the possibilities for group decision. The popular view looks to nothing more than the carrying of a majority vote. It assumes that the majority idea and

the minority idea must remain irreconcilable, that the clash over the drink evil, for example, must remain the one sharply drawn between the idea of "prohibition" and the idea of "license." Decision in the arguing group will then resemble the decision in a group playing football. One man hugs fast his smooth, round impenetrable idea, gets a majority to put the momentum of their wills behind it, and drives it to a score over the prostrate wills of the minority. That, indeed, is the best that can be achieved in the counsels of our ordinary unions, clubs, and political caucuses, made up as they are of people untrained to any co-operative method or spirit in arguing. But scientific students of discussion will wish to achieve something better. They realize that a decision will be carried out far more satisfactorily if the minority against it have been brought into some adjustment towards it, instead of merely beaten as a faction. Such an adjustment is possible only if the decision embodies *something* contributed by the minority. Emotionally it should represent a "composition of forces," not an all-leveling blast from one quarter. Intellectually it should be an "integration" of ideas,—what Miss M. P. Follett has called a "group-idea."¹ Viewed totally it would be what we shall call a "consensus."

As an ideal aim for discussion the "consensus" is not to be identified with compromise. A com-

¹ In *The New Stats*, chapters ii and iii.

promise between opposed ideas leaves them still mutually unpenetrated. It yields a mere balance between their claims, a harmony merely quantitative, each idea getting a measure of acceptance less than was hoped for, but neither getting any change of quality by taking into itself acceptable factors from the other. In the drink controversy, for example, the compromise decision is represented by local option. Two ideas here contend to oust each other: the idea of total prohibition and the idea of general license. Local option gives each idea acceptance in some places and not in others; but it leaves the partisans quite external to each other's minds. A compromise usually means that the work of discussion has been stalled by stubborn prejudices all round.

A true consensus, on the other hand, means that the discussion has been the accurate and considerate expression of concerted thinking. Just what concerted thinking is has been described by Miss Follett. When A, B, and C are in conference, each with a different idea, they do not build up brick-wise a group idea or plan of action by adding their ideas together. They mutually adjust their ideas, each bringing certain factors of his own idea into relation with factors of the others. "A says something. Thereupon a thought arises in B's mind. Is it B's idea or A's? Neither. It is a mingling of the two. We find that A's idea, after having been presented to B and returned to A, has become slightly

or largely, different from what it was originally. In like manner it is affected by C, and so on." Meanwhile B's idea has been affected by the others, and so has C's, so that all three ideas come to interact not as distinct psychic units but each as an interpenetrated system of idea-factors and feelings. It is much as in tennis where each man's play is a resultant of his own stroke and of the way the ball has come to him—*itself* a resultant of preceding strokes.

Really to illustrate a consensus we should have to reproduce the speeches that evolve it, but we can perhaps suggest how different ideas on the drink question might come thus to "integrate" into one. If A is an anti-saloon worker, B is a bon-vivant, and C is counsel for a brewery, each would doubtless begin by expressing a view that made much of some elements in the question and made little of others. Their differences would spring from the fact that A's chief concern is to see abstinence gain headway, B's is to see social cheer conserved, C's to see the brewing industry saved. But if they can discuss in any spirit of "get-together," they can reach some joint policy, —say that of a tax on drinks so graded as to make the highly alcoholic almost prohibitive and to leave the low-percentage almost free. That policy will reflect a common idea. To share in it A will have been brought to realize that his *essential* concern is with drink abuses, not with drink as such, that alcohol in low percentages may be no more noxious than other

common stimulants, and that the brewing interests may cease to corrupt politics if he no longer drives them to politics in self-defense. B and C, likewise, will have modified their views, realizing that the drink evil does call for some preventive legislation, that neither social pleasures nor business profits, however legitimate, can claim a right of way against public health and morals, and that other considerations, offered by A and by each other, must enter into any just conception of the whole case.

Such an agreement can be called "compromise" only inaccurately. A, B, and C, to be sure, have each toned down the statements with which he began. But this means not that he has ended by sacrificing something of what he really wants, but that he had begun by overstating his case. Over-statement, in fact, must always be allowed for. It springs partly from a speaker's feeling that the values at stake for him are underrated by his opponents, and partly from the compulsions of rhetoric. Expression in words always involves a mental struggle between precision and emphasis, and under excitement emphasis gets the upper hand—especially at first. Trained disputants all know that there is no come-down in yielding *something* of their contentions.

One ideal for discussion is that it *reveal to each speaker how he has phrased his claim so coarsely as to make it seem less compatible with the claims of others than it really is.*

To some readers the aim to reach a consensus may seem overaspiring. People are often cynical about argument, expecting it to result at best in "a man convinced against his will." But the cynics exaggerate the obstinacy of arguers. A man's pugnacity or vanity may check him from disclosing how much his thought is getting modified; but because he does not end by announcing himself a convert to new views it does not follow that he ends with a mind unchanged. His mental adjustments to the consensus require a little time. And if discussion is to be our general socializing agency, we should learn to refine upon the crudities that discredit it, until its high function has become generally recognized.

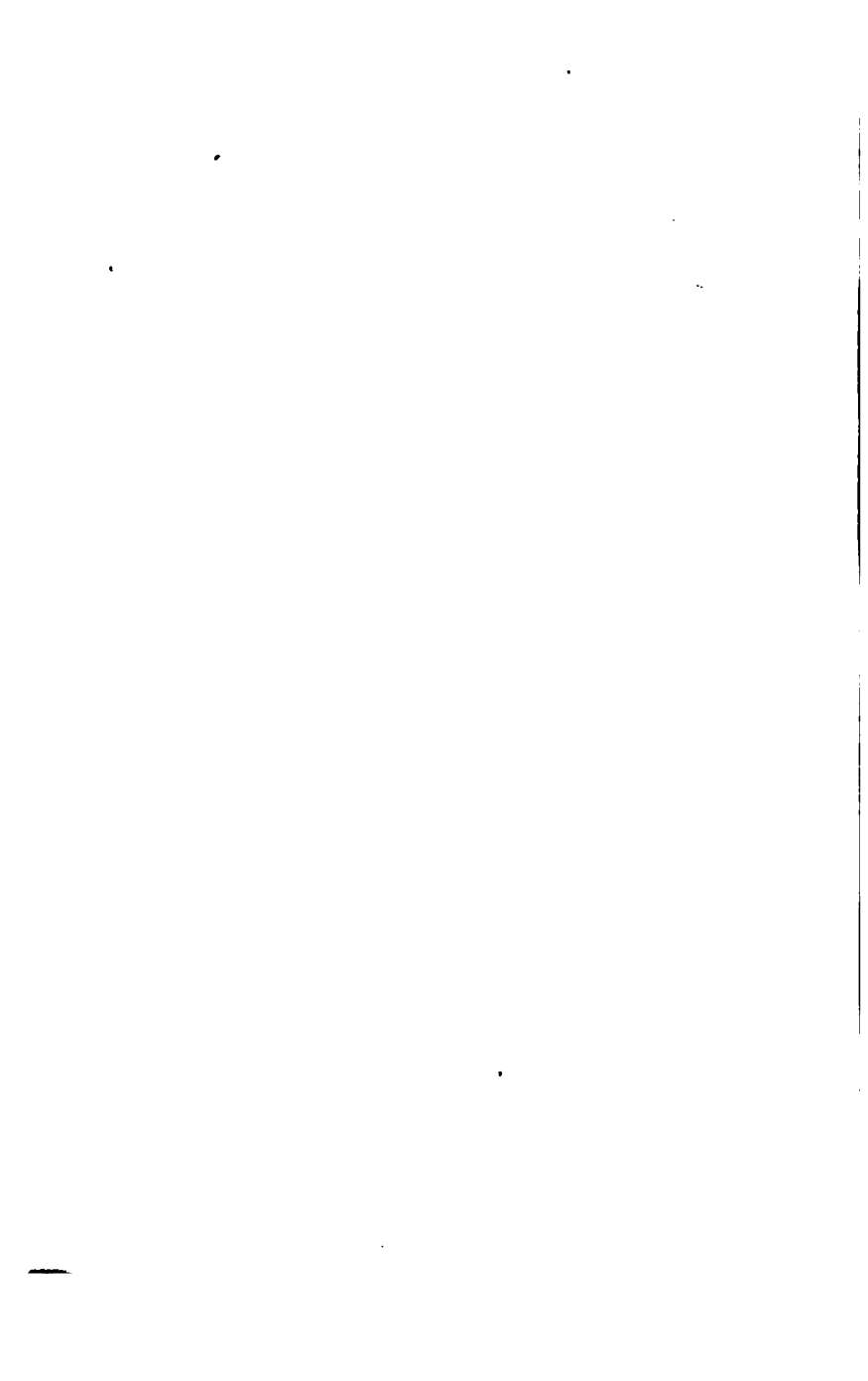
This introductory chapter has set out three points by which the student can take a profit-inviting attitude towards discussion. They are—

1. The right ambition for one's speaking is that it shall be influential.
2. A speaker's power to influence begins with a sense for the motive forces in other men's minds.
3. The ideal aim for a group of speakers is to create a "consensus" on the matter discussed—that is, a conception to which each has contributed and on which all are disposed to act.

INTRODUCTION

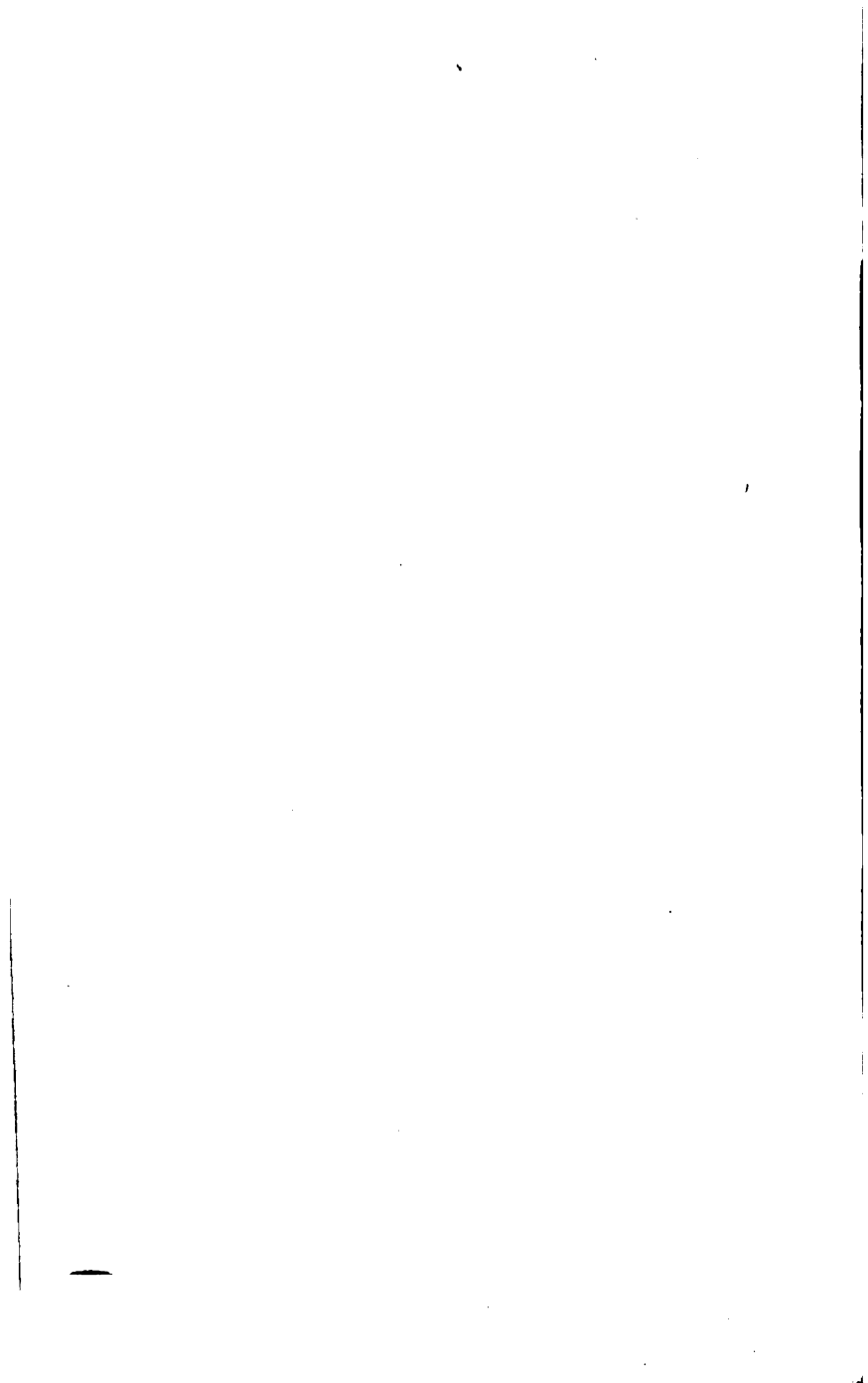
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Just as there is a right attitude of body and limbs for exerting one's full powers in wrestling, so there is this right attitude of mind for exerting one's full powers in speaking.

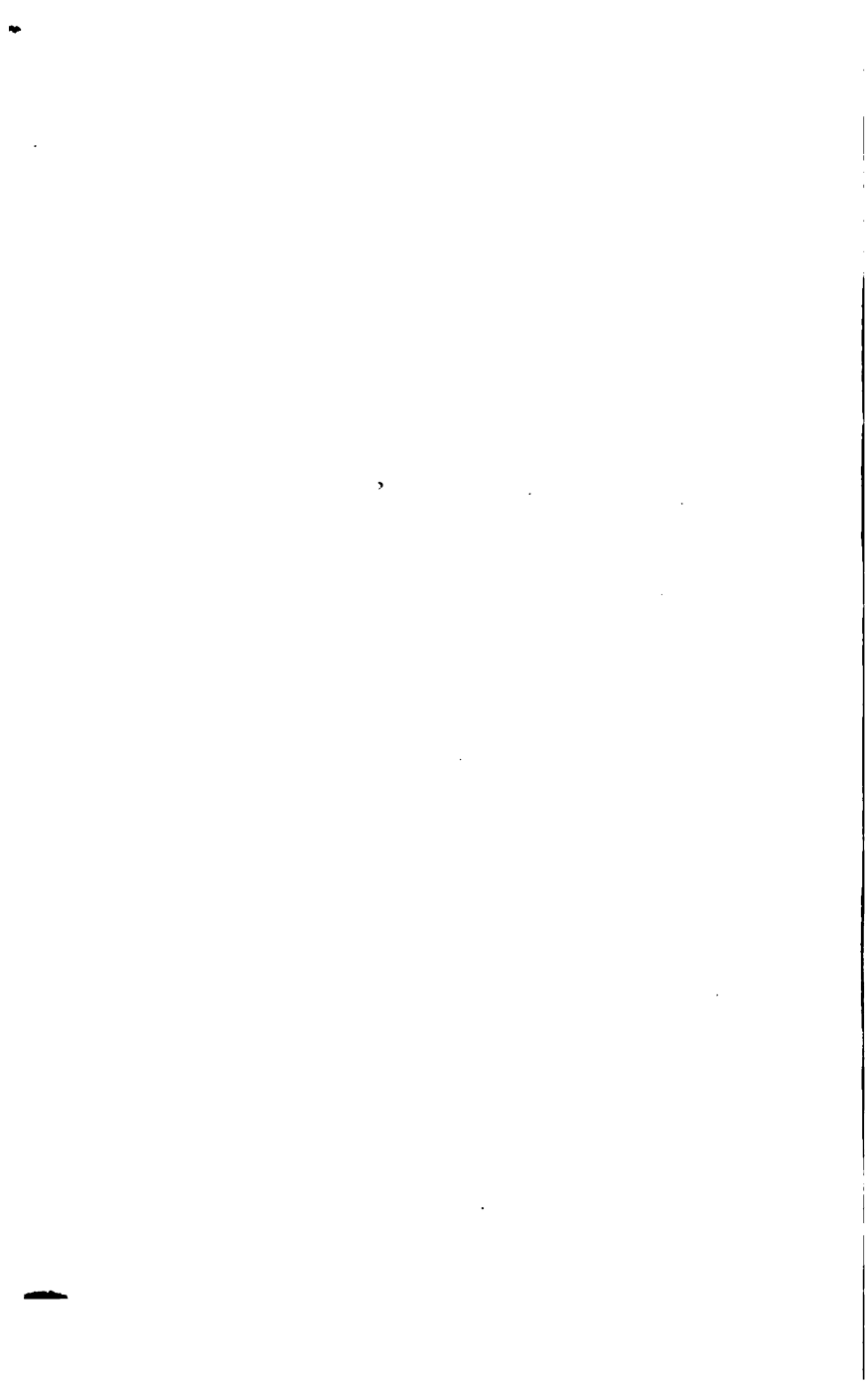


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**SECTION I: QUALIFYING ONESELF TO
CONTRIBUTE**



JOINING IN PUBLIC DISCUSSION

SECTION I: QUALIFYING ONESELF TO CONTRIBUTE

CHAPTER I

GAINING CONTROL OVER VOICE AND BEARING

One who is new to speaking in public is apt to feel himself handicapped by a lack of good speaking form. If your voice is harsh, thin, and monotonous, if you mispronounce words, if on rising to your feet you are struck with distressing sensations of awkwardness and embarrassment, you lose courage at the start—just when you most need it. All this can be remedied with a little pains,—if you will take pains *methodically*.

HOW TO ESTABLISH GOOD HABITS FOR SPEAKING

You talk at all hours in the day, not just at formal meetings. Your talking can confirm you either in

bad speech-habits or in good ones. Resolve to give a little *daily* attention to good speaking form.

Look first to your pronunciation. It is probably not as bad as you think. Your hearers probably don't think about it (their own being just as bad as yours), but the point is that *you* think about it when you are straining your courage to stand and make a speech. Just why should faulty pronunciation bother you? It is because at the back of your mind something whispers that mispronounced words will sound out of place in a public meeting—will make you seem just a bit presumptuous to be figuring as a speaker.

That whisper must be silenced. Of course, there is nothing discreditable about faults of pronunciation when they are marks of foreign "accent." Rather they do your intelligence credit, for they mean that you can think in two languages where the American-born can usually think only in one. Even so, you will better satisfy that inner censor (he is not a very reasonable one) if you rid your words of foreign accent. Usually a great deal of difference is made by a very few sounds. Attack them one at a time, listen to correct speakers as they pronounce that one sound, and imitate the right sound *in every common word that shows it*. For example, a Russian-Jewish speaker might begin with *th* in *they*, which he pronounces *dey*. By watching to pronounce it right

not only in *they* but in *the, those, then, there, with*, he will start "talking American" at once.

Faults of pronunciation are more damaging when they are due not to foreign birth but to mental laziness. About such faults the whispering censor is rather severe. He says they suggest that you do not care about words as the fine tools of the mind, and that your hearers will consequently expect from you a rough job in thought-expression where the occasion calls for a clean-cut one.

With many people pronunciation is indistinct because they do not make full use of their lips. The next time you hear an opera-singer, notice how widely he opens his mouth and how freely he moves his lips. Then look into a mirror while you speak a few sentences in your usual manner. You will realize how rigid and inert your lips are.

Try the following exercise. Read this page in a whisper to a friend sitting at the opposite side of the room. See if your lip motion can make up for the lack of voice in getting the words to him.

Begin correcting your careless articulation with a list of twenty important words—words likely to be used in public. For example—

accuracy	not akracy
catch	" ketch
coming	" comin'
could <i>have</i>	" coulda
don't <i>you</i>	" doncha

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draft	" draf'
everybody	" everybody
experiment	" 'sperimunt
figure	" figger
friend	" fren'
government	" govmunt
history	" histry
hundred	" hunderd
introduce	" interdoos
organization	" orginuhzation
respect	" respeck
separate	" seprate
something	" sompin'
unless	" onless

Practice this list once a day. Don't overdo the separate sounding of syllables. The ideal is not to make the sound stick out in the word but simply to keep its identity among the other sounds.

Add to this list from time to time other words that you tend to slur. Be sure to extend your mastery of a sound in one of these words to other words in which it occurs. For example, having mastered *coming*, don't let yourself say *goi'n'*, *bein'*, *stren'th*.

Attend next to your speaking tone. It should be sonorous, so that it will carry to the back of the room without any effort that strains your throat. A good tone can be established by attending to three points:¹

¹ The advice offered here owes much to the excellent introductory chapter of Irvah Winter's *Public Speaking Principles and Practice* (Macmillan, 1912).

- (1) Proper breathing for a "vocal support";
- (2) Relaxing the throat muscles;
- (3) Correct "placing" of the tone.

A tone gets resonance when it is formed at the top, so to speak, of a column of breath that goes down into the lower lungs.¹ A famous singing teacher used to say, "Drink your breath into your stomach." What he desired was to develop the feeling of using the diaphragm and waist muscles, and not of sticking out the chest. Do not force the lungs unnaturally full. A slow easy expansion that leaves a comfortable fullness at the waist-line gives the right "vocal support."

Gentle, deep breathing will make easy the next point of mastery: relaxing the throat-muscles. City life is so noisy that most people get a habit of constricting the delicate muscles around the larynx when they exert themselves to be heard. This not only checks the finer variations of the voice but leads to throat-fatigue. You can correct this fault when you practice, by thinking of the throat as simply a "way through," open and relaxed. The sustaining action for speaking is below the throat; the shaping action is well above it, in the mouth.²

The third point of mastery is the correct "placing" of the tone. Sound the letter "m," prolonging it into a soft hum which you feel at the roof of the

¹ I. Winter, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

mouth, well forward. This spot of natural resonance can be felt as the right point of percussion for the speaking tone. Practice this correct placing on words with "rounded" vowels, as *moon, hold, war*, and then practice it with a slight "rounding" (that is, pursing of the lips on words like *deep, bet, sick*, wherein the vowels are apt to be thin and flat. Memorize the following lines and speak them in full easy tones as you walk out in the morning:—

O Rome! My country! City of the soul!
 The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
 Lone mother of dead empires! and control
 In their shut breasts their petty misery.

Having established a good speaking tone, the next step is to use it with expressive variety. Many speakers strike a pitch in which they feel assured that their voice is "carrying," and then keep to that pitch monotonously all through their speech. Let your voice rise and fall musically, so that statement, question, exhortation, confidential side-remark, emotional fervor, each gets its appropriate modulation.

The best way to gain the right control of one's voice and to confirm good habits of speaking is to read aloud for a few minutes *every day*. Read to your family a short passage from the newspaper at meal time. Do not let the advice here given lead you into forced exaggerations of the points of good speaking. Sit erect, breathe deeply but gently, and read with clear natural intonation. As days go on

you will be gratified at the pleasing sonority that your voice is showing.

HOW TO OVERCOME EMBARRASSMENT

Good voice habits assure you speech-control in public—once your speaking gets under way. “But,” you complain, “before I can get under way I am overcome with embarrassment!”

What is embarrassment? It is partly a distress of body. As the moment approaches when you are to rise to your feet, you find your heart chugging, your breathing heavy, and your mouth dry. The reason for this is told by Professor W. E. Hocking.¹ While you have been sitting, one among many, unnoticed, inactive, irresponsible, your bodily engine has been running on low pressure. Now you are changing from this passive state to a state of effort. Speaking calls for vigorous activity of your vital organs, and those sensations mean that your bodily engine is getting up steam.

But embarrassment is partly a distress of mind. Your sudden consciousness of impeding bodily sensations saps your courage. Your attention is slightly distracted from your message to yourself. The mortifying thought crosses your mind that all these eyes turned upon you will notice your little agitated hesitations and awkwardnesses and will take them as

¹ In *Morale and Its Enemies*, p. 156.

signs of incompetence. In short, you feel yourself likely to cut a poor figure.

So disconcerting is this "stage-fright" that many excellent thinkers quail before it and sit silent. Yet it is easy to overcome. Now that you know just what embarrassment is you can take the right measures to meet it.

Four things can be done before you begin speaking—

1. *Rid your mind of the "critical audience" illusion.*

Little flaws in your speaking form will last in your hearers' memory for hardly five minutes. They will remember only what you had to say. Meanwhile if they notice your embarrassment at all, they only feel respect for your pluck in mastering it.

2. *Formulate a minimum plan of your speech.*

It will save you from aggravating your embarrassment by forgetting what you want to say. The minimum plan should contain:

- a. The two or three main *steps* in your whole thought. For example:
 - (1) Last speaker has misunderstood the point.
 - (2) His objection does not apply.
 - (3) He overlooks a special advantage.

b. A telling sentence to sit down with. It ensures your speech against a fizzling out at the end:—and impromptu tends fatefully towards anticlimax.

3. *Help your body to establish its "level of action."*

Realize that your chugging heart, oppressed breathing, and dry lips mean "that your body is making dumb efforts to prepare for a new level of action, and your self-consciousness may become a help: *by rousing yourself to a position of alertness and taking a few breaths of your own accord*, you can give nature a lift, and make the transition less abrupt." ¹

4. *Stand firmly erect and pause for attention, before you begin speaking.*

Pause just long enough to draw in a deep breath and look your hearers over.

Four items of advice can be applied while you are speaking—²

1. *Talk to the back row*—at least in beginning.

You will hit every one closer in.

2. *Talk slowly.* For the hearer a missed word is a spoiled thought.

¹W. E. Hocking: *Op. cit.*, p. 156.

²Some of these maxims were issued by the Treasury Department to speakers for the Fourth Liberty Loan Campaign.

3. *Use short sentences*, especially when feeling your way. Jumbled clauses will confuse the hearer and embarrass you.
4. *If you forget, never mind*: pass at once to your next step.

SUGGESTED EXERCISE

Pick out from your reading a passage to read aloud before the class. It should make one definite "point" and not take over four minutes to speak deliberately. Study out the main steps in the passage. Read it to the class expressively and add a comment of your own, *applying* its thought to something within your own observation.

The following passage ¹ is an example:—

Either the people are fit to govern or they are not. If they are fit to govern, it is no function of government to protect them from any kind of propaganda. They will protect themselves. That capacity for self-protection is the very essence of self-government. Without it popular institutions are inconceivable, and the moment that a republican government sets itself up as the nurse-maid of the people, to train their immature minds to suit its own ends and to guard them from influences that it considers contaminating, we already have a revolution and a revolution backward, a revolution by usurpation.

But, it will be said, the doctrines that government

¹ Abridged from a letter in *The New Republic*.

is called upon to suppress are of foreign origin; they are advocated in large part by aliens; they are antagonistic to the principles of the Republic.

What of it? This is not the first time there has been nation-wide unrest and discontent. It is not the first time that wild remedies have been prescribed for public ills. It is not the first time that foreign theories have invaded the United States. It is not the first time that property rights have been attacked in their citadel.

American conservatives were once quite as terrified by the spread in this country of the theories of the French Revolution as they are now by the spread of Bolshevism. They were quite as eager for repression; yet the French Revolution never shattered an American institution. It raised up no American breed of Marats and Robespierres. It set up no guillotines on American soil. The American people threshed the issue out and went on their way.

Is it not possible that they still retain a scanty remnant of their ancient common sense? Is it not possible that they might even listen to a sympathetic exposition of Bolshevism without being seized with a desire to destroy everything they have created and give themselves over to famine and anarchy in order to establish a dictatorship of the proletariat?

I am not afraid of Bolshevism in the open, where the American people can examine it. I am not afraid that the American people are going to rise up *en*

masse and destroy the institution of their own private property. And I remember that the preamble of the Constitution does not begin "We the Government of the United States," but "We the people of the United States."

The failures of popular government have always been failures of public opinion—mostly of public opinion that was ill-informed, that was denied the facts, that was misguided by self-constituted masters. That will always remain the great menace, and public opinion is never to be safeguarded by trying to prevent it by law from coming into contact with heresy. There is no surer way to give heresy a hold than to proscribe it. The proscribed doctrine is the one that is whispered everywhere in the ear of discontent and that can claim in its favor the test of martyrdom.

CHAPTER II

HOW TO DECIDE WHAT TO SAY

Your training for speaking up in public is now well started. You know definite things to do day by day for gaining an expressive voice and articulation. When your turn comes to say something, you know how to minimize the difficulty of embarrassment. You now want to know how your mind should attack the matter under discussion so that you will say something constructive.

TWO QUESTIONS OUT THE ISSUE OPEN

In November, 1919, a college student was sitting in a public forum. Public interest had been stirred by the threat of a miners' strike in the bituminous coal fields, and this forum had been called to discuss the issue.

The speakers were informed, responsible men, and the student resolved to take down their most significant statements. His note-book showed the following quotations, taken from several speeches.

1. The miners want a 60% increase in wages. In 1917 pick miners got a raise of about 30%, machine miners got a raise of about 40%.

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2. The miners want a six-hour day and a five-day week. In 1917 most of them got the eight-hour day.
3. Coal, even to-day (1919) is cheaper in the United States than elsewhere in the world.
4. No coal operator can be blamed for not mining coal at a cost of \$4.00 per ton to sell at \$2.00 per ton.
5. During the early stage of American mining the abundance of coal, its location in thick and exposed seams, its nearness to iron ores, all stimulated American industrial expansion.
6. Coal represents nearly one-third of our railroad freight.
7. Nearly 50% of the potential supply from the mines is being wasted. This is due to:
 - (1) Incomplete scraping of the coal-seams.
 - (2) Abandoning of partly exploited mines.
 - (3) Non-utilizing of coal-dust and impure coal for such by-products as tar, benzol, ammonium sulphate, etc.
8. On each dollar paid by the consumers the operator's margin of profit was before 1917 six cents; from April to August, 1917, 36 cents; from April to December, 1918, 23 cents. American coal operators profited by the war to the extent of 100% on their capital stock.
9. Except when regulated by the government the operation of the mines varied from 195 days

to 260 days per year. The miners' demand for five 6-hour days per week for 50 weeks is a demand for from 13% to 21% more work than they have ever been given.

10. The productivity of mine-labor is conditioned by (1) its management, (2) equipment and training, (3) fatigue.
11. As compared with European mine-engineering American management is ignorant and primitive.
12. A six-hour day of work underground, in hot, damp air subject to coal-dust and gases, with poor light, and under the strain of constant danger, is not a light work-day, especially as nearly two hours must be added for getting to and from the work-place.

Here are twelve statements, all dealing with the coal industry. They were made by speakers all aware that the matter (1) was a complicated problem, (2) involved grievances and fears of various sorts, (3) demanded a solution that would leave everybody concerned at least working instead of "agitating." Had you dropped in at that forum, and looked over these statements, what should you have asked about the whole matter?

You would have asked two questions:—

1. *What is it?* What are the essential factors in this situation? What items of fact and

policy are *relevant*, that is, have the bearing of causes and effects?

2. *What of it?* Whose claims and grievances are at stake? What rights, interests, and feelings are touched?

Until you had asked yourself, and found some answer, however sketchy, to those questions, you would have nothing to contribute to the discussion. *You would not feel yourself to be really a part of the meeting.*

Suppose now that you did ask these questions?

Asking yourself "What is this whole issue?" you might answer: "The irregular employment and the waste seem to be effects of operating the mines for immediate profits. The shortage and the cost are factors in business unsettlement because the public is dependent upon coal. The issue is essentially one between private management of the mines for profit and public management of the mines for use."

Asking yourself "What of it?" you might answer: "The miners have at stake their standard of living; the operators have at stake their property rights; some of the public feel strongly the pinch of high-priced coal; others feel more strongly a fear of socialism."

Observe now that in answering these two questions you have put yourself in a position to say something. It is hardly possible that you have not either had

some experience or read something that stirs your interest in at least one of these answers. And since your experience plus your reading plus your personal sense of values give something distinctive to your view, that view is needed in the discussion if the discussion is to make progress towards a real consensus. You have now only to realize that a view, in order to be shared, must be *explained, illustrated, freed from likely misunderstanding*, and your mind will busy itself at once with the things to be said in order to get its view clearly and fully expressed.

HEEDING THE POINTS OF VIEW

The student who is thinking out what he has to say sometimes gets advice to the following effect: "First *explain* your idea; then *persuade* the meeting to accept it." Such advice implies that one can present the logic of one's ideas as something apart from their emotional appeal. That is not the case. Controversial ideas—such ideas as "employment," "profit," "collective bargaining," "temperance," "culture," "the ignorant vote"—cannot be treated as abstractions. They are ideas highly charged with human values. And since men bring to their thinking on such ideas different experiences and different interests, one must, in meditating what to say, think what they mean from other people's points of view.

In framing your remarks on the coal issue, for example, you may be thinking of "unemployment."

Now from the miners' point of view "employment" means work that earns rent, clothes, and groceries. But from the operators' point of view "employment" means work that fills orders. Whichever point of view you take, make your language show that you *understand* the other point of view.

The most formidable speaker is the man who can state his opponent's position better than the opponent himself. Such a man is aware of the emotional fringe of ideas. He knows that ideas may have the same logical *import* for everybody, but have quite differing *importance*.

The idea of "drink" in a social worker's mind is apt to be fringed with a slight repugnance: it savors of drunken fathers and pauperism. But in a laborer's mind its fringe is apt to be pleasant: it suggests a fillip to jaded nerves at the fag-end of his day. The idea of "a man's right to his drink" carries to a clergyman a stigma of selfishness. His mind has been sensitized to take more joy in one tippler reclaimed than in ninety-nine tasters of the amenities who need no reclaiming, and he remembers St. Paul's "If meat maketh my brother to offend, I will eat no meat." To a club-man, however, "a man's right to his drink" carries almost the assurance of his manhood. Because some brothers are sots, he will feel, is no reason for putting all brothers on pap and pos-tum cereal.

Now if prohibition or any other issue is to be dis-

cussed as a *community* concern, its thinking-out must be addressed to the differing points of view. For if adopted as a community policy, its carrying-out will depend not only upon the zeal of its first advocates but upon *some measure of co-operation* from many who must get a new emotional adjustment towards it. This means that men can hope to reach practical conclusions with ideas only on condition of trying to understand each other's *reactions* to ideas.

Such an understanding of the feelings at stake will at least check the tendency of discussion to get sidetracked on matters that are clearly incidental but that have been made to touch a disputant's self-respect. No one has learned the ABC of discussion who cannot plan his speaking with some regard to this consideration. It is urged here not as a bid for fair-spiritedness, but as a reminder of the fundamental question: *What result do you wish for your speaking?* Are you scoring clever hits for cleverness' sake? Are you descanting invective to delight the ears of your own faction? Or are you talking to advance the discussion towards a real consensus? Speeches that run to wit or tirade may spring from the promptings of vanity. More insidiously they may spring from intellectual laziness. Exuberant prejudice is easier to express than a discriminated plea. Prejudice, too, is a defensive reaction of ignorance—"you're apt to be 'down' on what you're not 'up' on"—and you have to rouse yourself from its

instinctive level to the level of attention to facts. And, since an opponent's view can always be so expressed as to seem selfish or fatuous, what is more tempting than to snatch a cheap advantage by caricaturing it?

Ridicule, wit, and invective, of course, all have their place in a discussion, but in the larger survey of its issues we must recognize our ultimate success to lie in correcting opinions, not in discrediting people. Issues are really understood only as related to normal types of people. Prohibition, for example, involves ideas that can be associated with cranks and kill-joys. But those ideas appeal to men of red blood as well. So, their opponents can be visualized as bull-necked beer-magnates and their tippling victims. But they number also a host of respectable citizens. Ultimately it is the satisfying of *differing but equally right-minded* sorts of people that will settle the drink question. To use our social imagination, therefore, to put ourselves in others' places and *sense the different action-tendencies of our ideas in other men's minds*—this is the really constructive preliminary.

HEEDING THE LOGICAL ESSENTIALS

It is now clear that the plan of your remarks will start right if you think of the divergent values that are at stake. But your quick forecast of your remarks should reckon with one more concern—the matter of *proportion*.

Your speech is to be one of a number of speeches, each contributing to a general understanding of a large issue. The hope is that the speeches will make the thought of all converge towards a clarified and corrected joint conception of the subject under dispute. Such a conception, therefore, is a composite idea, harmonizing together certain idea-factors that are essential to the agreement of everybody. For example, a discussion of the coal crisis will center upon the conception of "mine management." At the outset of the speaking there will be no *joint* conception, since each speaker has a mental picture of mine management that is warped by his special interest. But it will be possible to harmonize special interests that are *the claims of responsible factions, not the whims of individuals.*

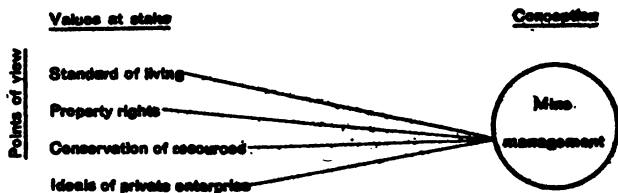
In thinking out your speech, therefore, it is not enough to recognize that such and such values are involved. You must recognize which are major values and which are minor ones. *A major value is one that carries the assent or dissent of a responsible faction.* The health of miners is a major value. No conception of mine management will draw the assent of mine-workers that does not include as one factor the idea of safeguarding health for them; and without their assent there can be no *joint* conception as a basis for community policy. The trouble to operators of electrifying great areas of territory from power plants at the mouth of the mines is a minor value. If it is

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too much trouble for them it is not too much trouble for the public, which cannot afford to leave such enormous potential powers wasted. This distinction between major values and minor values will keep you aware in speaking of the bearing of your remarks upon the whole case. It does not mean that a minor value should not be *mentioned*. It means that your speaking will keep it in its place as a minor value and throw the emphasis upon a major value.

As you listen to the discussion, try to make a sketchy little analysis of the "conception" involved so as to get a picture of its essential logical factors. Thus for the coal issue an analysis would look somewhat as follows:

The Coal Issue: What is it?



With such a little sketch-map of the whole issue you can express your thought in a way to show *where* it fits and *how* it counts in the total case.

SUGGESTED EXERCISE

Let the class agree on a topic of which the matter affects differently different groups of people, and

identify the points of view towards it by heeding what people have at stake in it. The class will be helped to get at the points of view by thinking first what has been planned by different people to *do* about the matter; then what *motives* prompt such action. If quotations on the topic can be offered, they invite *interpretations* that express points of view.

An example of such a topic would be "Americanization." Some people plan to use the schools to graft foreign minds upon colonial America's Anglo-Saxon tradition. Some look to a "melting pot" plan to blend diverse traditions. Some would work for a "federation of cultures"—as in Switzerland, a democratic commonwealth with three ethnic cultures, distinct yet perhaps complementary.

The motives behind these plans are some cultural, some political, some industrial (Witness the "American plan" for dealing with labor!).

The following quotation offers a contrast in points of view:—

The new generation will look back at us who prided ourselves on being good business men, and marvel how we could be so unbusiness-like as to have these rich potential resources of civilization under our hand and never tap them. Is it conceivable, they will say, that New York could have harbored more Italians than Rome and yet encouraged them to leave no more of a characteristic mark on the general culture of the city? How is it possible that great settle-

ments of Slavs and Celts, quick-witted, sentimental people, naturally well-mannered, lived so long in our Middle States without being laid under contribution against the dismal and illiberal ideals of social life prevailing there? Then they will read, perhaps, of our inept proposals to Americanize these people by machinery—proposals as of those who would do all the teaching and none of the learning, all the giving and none of the taking, all the preaching and none of the practicing—and be thankful that Americanization is possible only according to the spirit that Americans themselves are of.

CHAPTER III

WHAT MAKES A SPEECH SUCCESSFUL

You now understand how to take part in a discussion. Even if you came unprepared, your mind would not be at a loss to find where and what it can contribute. It has two key questions: *what is it?* and *what of it?* to open its way. These questions apply:

1. To the whole subject under discussion. So applied they suggest *where* you can contribute; they establish the relation between your point of view and the point of view of other speakers; and they give you a sense of proportion among the values at stake.
2. To your speech as a contribution to the meeting. So applied they will help your speech to take an effective form.

This second application needs to be made clear. You need to get a sense of the psychological problem in speaking and a power of improvising speech-plans.

A speech gets its cutting-edge, as it were, from clean-cut thinking, so that its form should develop by

attention to the thought-forces that organize it rather than to any speech-maker's rules. In chapters IV to VII you will come to close quarters with logic, which develops good form indirectly, by involving it in points of skillful thinking. But since in the meanwhile you will be trying out your speech-organizing powers, this chapter offers a "rationale" by which your practice may be made to count for effectiveness at once.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEM

Perhaps some one has put in your hands a volume of model speeches—masterpieces by famous orators. Naturally you expect to learn points of successful speaking from them, and so indeed you will. But somehow they do not quite fit your case. They tackle a different problem from yours. Most of them were "set numbers" on the program, whereas your speech must refer to arguments preceding and must expect a rejoinder. Announced and made place for, they had an initial attention guaranteed, whereas your speech must make its own bid for attention. Many of them canvass whole topics at length, whereas yours must concentrate: your hearers grow restive if it runs over your fair share of the time. Instead of an oratorical solo your contribution is properly a five-minute theme within a concerted performance. Just what can you expect it to do?

It can *start a mind-wave that breaks into action*. When you strike a canoe-paddle into a pool you start

a wave running through its entire surface. That wave ends by delivering an impact that moves something. Other paddles may start waves that cross or even counter yours, but they cannot eliminate it. They can only create a composite wave-impact. Your speech can act thus on the thought of the meeting, if it delivers the right mental stroke. What principle will impart this right stroke?

THE KEY FORMULA: SHAPE EXPLANATION TO
POINT A DEMAND

This formula will make your speech answer both key questions. *Explanation* answers "What is it?" *Demand* answers "What of it?" Think first of the demand. Whether in so many words or by plain implication your speech should say: Accept this view! Reconsider that purpose! Renew your confidence! Beware! Ally yourself! Subscribe! Vote! Take a part!¹ The idea of some one definite response should act like a magnet among the things you have to say. And this idea carries with it two important considerations.

The first consideration is: *Just what response is a practicable one to expect from this meeting?* Many good speeches are wasted because they are effort misapplied: they bid for a response that is either impossible or inappropriate to the group addressed. In the

¹ In the following passage the writer is indebted to Charles H. Woolbert's article on "Persuasion: Principles and Method" in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education*. April, 1919.

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discussion on the coal crisis, one speaker seemed to be urging his hearers to join the miners' union. But he was talking to a group made up largely of business and professional people. The response he should have aimed at was, Sympathize with the union miners.

The second consideration is: *Make the demand specific.* Notice how differently your hearers will be stirred by the specific differences in the following forms of appeal:—

- (1) Accept my theory of nationalization for the mines.
- (2) Pass a resolution at once in its favor.
- (3) Join our Nationalization Club.
- (4) Vote for Smith who is pledged for nationalization.

Success or failure for your speech may turn on the accuracy with which you have discriminated the demand that it conveys.

WIN ATTENTION TO ONE KEY-IDEA

The mind of a hearer has, underlying all its conscious thoughts and feelings, a ground-swell of the great basic instincts: self-protective, acquisitive, creative. No demand really *moves* it until impulses of one or more of these types have been caught up into its sway. Writers on the psychology of persuasion, therefore, all have something to say on the impulsive power that ideas gather simply by focusing

the action-tendencies of one's instincts.¹ What action-tendencies you can best stir depends of course on the type of people before you. If they are of stock-holding families and your demand is for assent to public ownership of coal mines, your words must reach their tendencies to play safe; if they are railway employees, your words must chime in with impulses to better their earnings; if they are a miscellaneous group of workers, your words can stir most vividly the creative impulses involved in sharing the management of industry. Your demand, that is, must take a form that sets up reverberations among your hearers' motives—their effective desires.

We have already noted that all social ideas are charged with action-tendencies. Every social idea can be made electric *if you can fix people's attention upon it*. Find a key-idea for your speech—one that summarizes your "demand," and win attention to that idea until its action-tendencies spring into play.

In the following passage notice how the idea of "study" is held up in a way to enlist the instincts of imitation and rivalry:—

You send your son and daughter to school and make them study. Head work is something you believe in, something you pay taxes for, and vote for. In making your children study you ask them to do something you should be willing to do yourself.

¹The subject is discussed (with quotations from leading psychologists) in a chapter on "Influencing Conduct" by J. A. Winans in *Public Speaking*. Sewell Publishing Co., 1915.

We ask you to study this pamphlet. The employer studies price-schedules. He studies the markets. His mind is always on the job. He meets other coal-owners and discusses these things in his office, at lunch, at the club. If it is worth his while to keep learning how he can get more profit out of coal, it is worth our while to study how we can get a better life out of coal.¹

LET SLEEPING DOGS (INHIBITIONS) LIE

Hammer your response-impelling idea home, but in doing so remember your hearer's point of view. The merely forceful hammerer hits the nail on the head—and a thumb besides. Do not let your words rouse prejudices, fears, pet aversions that will say “no” to your demand. Try to understand what rooted ideas in your hearer's mind may act as *inhibitions*.

Briefly this comes down to an effort to realize the *sentiments* that determine men's points of view. The things a man most cares about become magnetic points of reference in his thinking: they organize his emotions and instincts into little systems centering upon his ideas of value. These permanent magnetic ideas are what we here mean by “sentiments.” A “personality” is a little constellation of sentiments,² and

¹ *Why the Miners' Program*, p. 3. Published by District No. 2, United Mine Workers of America. Clearfield, Pa.

² See Alexander Shand: *The Foundations of Character*, Book I.

a *type* of person—for all political purposes—is a sort of character-pattern of sentiments that must be reckoned with as recurring among people. So considered, a hearer will not be merely put down, say, as “conservative.” We shall try to realize what “sentiment” makes him react conservatively in the matter under question. And once we are aware of it, we must avoid stirring it into antagonism.

If, for example, you are proposing to change your town government to the city manager plan, you might make a point of this plan’s recent adoption in other cities as putting it in the line of progress. Now “progress” is an idea wholly congenial to some people. But to one who has mastered the present technique of City Hall, “progress” will sound a bit unsettling. It suggests the antiquating of a mastery the idea of which has become a sentiment, a vested claim of his self-esteem. He does not, of course, stand up as a “conservative” and oppose “progress.” But the counter-pull of his sentiment disposes him to temporize with the idea of progress. As Mr. W. E. Walling has observed,¹ he will concede progress to be “inevitable,”—but imply that this makes no change necessary just now. He will “assert the indubitable fact that real progress is slow,—and imply that wisdom consists in deprecating haste.” What is important to realize in all this is that his talk is but a defense-reaction. It should give you the tip

¹ Cited by Walter Lippmann: *Drift and Mastery*, p. 181.

to develop your "progress" idea in such terms as will not suggest scrapping his present political lore.

Inhibitions are often stirred by needless combativeness in presenting one's view. A writer quoted by Professor Winans makes an anti-suffragist say: "Mother, you made your grand mistake in running Votes-for-Women as a controversy. It never was. It is not now. Not a man in my set really understands any argument against suffrage. But you folks labeled it a battle, and we are just filling in the mob cues."

The moral is obvious. *Avoid a belligerent tone.* It exaggerates the disagreement and bids for a combative response.

THE PRACTICAL MAXIMS

Practically the aim to fix attention upon your idea until its response-implications have gathered headway suggests some hints for effective form in the speech. They can be put as four maxims:—

1. *Challenge attention at the start.* The facts and details that develop your idea will inevitably tax your hearers' interest. They will be more disposed to think them out with you if you have roused their curiosity.
2. *Make explanation pithy and compact.* At best explanation is apt to seem long; when wordy it seems broken-backed. Cut down

clauses into phrases: avoid multiple statements tagged together with *and* and *so*.

3. *Make transitions plain.* Such transition-phrases as, "In the first place," . . . "In the second," etc., are plain, but obvious. More skillful are parallel clause-forms at each step. Thus—"The treaty displeases the liberals. . . . The treaty disappoints the jingoes."

4. *Finish strong and sharp.* Roused action-impulses need something slogan-like to keep them vibrating.

The points of successful speaking sketched in this chapter may be concretely summarized by a specimen five-minute speech, with comments in the margin to note what it illustrates. The speech should be thought of as addressed to trade-unionists, sympathetic towards Ireland but "conservative" towards Russia. The meeting is debating a resolution of protest against the raid on the Soviet Bureau in New York.

Our attitude towards democratic revolutions got a test last week. Three huge sight-seeing wagons toured our streets, packed with men and women waving the flag of the Irish Republic and singing the songs of Irish independence. The bystanders seemed to approve; the

Challenges attention with a striking statement.

Compact summary of the incident.

police looked on benevolently; and the newspapers had no denunciations the next morning. In short this act of propaganda seemed to "get by."

Suppose, however, three wagon-loads of Russians had appeared on Fifth Avenue, waving the flags and singing the songs of *their* revolution—how far would they have got? What would the police have done? Where would the newspapers have found words strong enough for the "outrage on America's hospitality"?

Concrete suggestion of the "key idea": analogy between Russian and Irish revolutions.

And yet, in the official view of our government, the Irish Republic and the Russian Soviet Republic stand upon exactly the same footing.

Eamonn de Valera, President of the Irish Republic—more power to him!—comes to this country and takes the presidential suite at the Waldorf. Is he promptly nabbed and haled to court as an alien fomenting rebellion against a friendly Power? Does a pack of State constabulary and private detectives raid his apart-

"More power," etc., averts the inhibiting suspicion that the speaker is unsympathetic towards the Sinn Féin.

ments and pilfer his belongings? Do the newspapers raise the view-halloo? Nothing of the sort. On the contrary—talk about propaganda!—he harangued forty thousand people in Boston the other day. Governors, Senators, and mayors do him honor. He issues a statement of Irish republican policy, and the newspapers print it in full.

Facts in the case of the raid on the Soviet Bureau are here called to mind by rhetorical questions. This avoids a tame recital.

What now is the difference between Tweedledum Lenin and Tweedledee Valera that America glowers upon one and smiles upon the other? It is this. De Valera's revolution seeks to change a political order. Like our revolutionary fathers he looks to a democracy of voters and office-holders. Lenin's revolution seeks to change an economic order. He looks to a democracy without class lines of income-drawers and property-less workers.

Plain transition from citing incidents to pointing their moral. Note the parallel forms of the sentences expressing the comparison.

Right here we have the really unforgivable difference. If Lenin would set up a good, foursquare, privilege-maintaining political repub-

lic, it would be no time before we should be discovering what a great man he is and what a pity he was so long misunderstood. And as for Bolshevik man-killings, they would fade into the background with the red terrors of the French Revolution—as birth pains of a new and better order.

Nothing like this is very likely to happen. Perhaps it ought not to happen. Perhaps Lenin's democracy is a fabric of ideas that will not work. But the sight of America cheering the agents of political democracy and hounding the agents of industrial democracy brings home one question to you and me. Is our attitude towards Lenin due to a secret admission that his ideas might work after all—but work at some cost to you and me? ¹

Note that the "demand" for a change of attitude towards Soviet Russia is softened into an appeal for self-questioning as

to the "motives" that sustain the present attitude. Such a response is all that this meeting can be brought to just now.

SUGGESTED EXERCISE

Cut out from a newspaper an editorial or short article that "develops" a stirring idea. Lay it out on sheets of paper so that you have a large margin for

¹The speech is a recasting of an editorial from *The Nation* for July 12, 1919.

writing in changes. Think of a specific group of hearers to which its thought might be addressed. Then make freely any cuts, rewordings and additions that will convert it into a five-minute speech, appealing to that group.

The following article (abridged from one by Stuart Chase in *The Nation* for July 20, 1921) is of the suitable type. Notice how vague and general its present appeal is:—

WASTE AND LABOR

Watermelons. Thousands of them. Large, juicy watermelons decorating the Potomac River from Alexandria to Indian Head. Some floating down stream; some caught in the reeds and marsh grass; some high and dry on the shore. They had arrived in Washington one day last August when the watermelon market was bearish, and, five thousand strong, they had been taken out to the docks and dumped. Meanwhile it is safe to assume that the watermelon appetite of Washington had been by no means assuaged. But, Allah be praised, the market had been stabilized!

Locomotives. Thousands of them. Large, powerful locomotives. But with something askew: a leaky valve, a choked flue, a rickety tender. These locomotives in the year 1919 had to be shopped—hung up on cranes and tinkered with. The railroads had shops with cranes and men. But the locomotives did

not go into these shops. No, not as a rule. They went to other shops, maintained by outside supply companies, leaving the men and the cranes in the home shops with nothing to do. Idle men to be sure can be fired—and they were by the hundreds. But idle shops and idle cranes cannot, alas, be fired. They can only sit eating their heads off in depreciation, taxes, interest, insurance, and overhead generally. Meanwhile the railroads paid the supply companies for repairing their locomotives on the basis of direct labor cost plus 110 per cent for overhead and profit—a whale of a price. Meanwhile they paid in addition all the overhead on their own empty shops—making the total bill for repairs almost Himalayan. All of which you will agree is an insane procedure. Not at all. Not under the rules of businesslike acumen as practiced by captains of industry. This was a sound strategic move on the part of the financial managers of the railroads. For observe, they could on the one hand shift the high cost to the Government, which was paying them 6 per cent over and above cost, and on the other hand throw the fear of God into the shop craft unions (who were getting altogether too cocky). Thus was justice served, and private initiative vindicated.

Here is a printing establishment. A union rule provides that all advertising matter coming into the shop in electrotype must be reset in type by the compositors. The union graciously sanctions the use of

the electrotype, but insists that the type be set and redistributed to secure the equivalent hours of work involved in setting up the original. This folderol is sometimes solemnly enacted days after the advertisement has gone to press.

Watermelons, locomotives, and printing presses. These are but three examples picked at random from the almost universal sabotage—now great, now small—of the modern industrial system. In the sum total these practices must reach amazing figures. The waste which flows from them is incalculable. And by waste is meant idle labor or idle plant, or labor and plant devoted to the production of goods or services which satisfy no recognizable human need.

Vast quantities of production are drained away in luxuries and in harmful or unnecessary products. War, and preparations for war, take their colossal toll. But if labor is ever to rise from the relative misery of its surroundings, more of the right kind of stuff—more houses, more wheat, more shoes, more schools—has got to be produced. And only through the progressive elimination of waste can production be progressively increased.

The analysis of waste, and its relation to watermelons, locomotives, and printing presses, promises to shed a light on these fundamental matters. If labor is ever to increase measurably its standard of living it must take up the challenge which the industrial engineer has thrown down.

CHAPTER IV

STICKING TO THE POINT

Effectiveness in the speech you have seen to be largely a psychological problem. It must maneuver ideas with a regard to feelings. But it is also a logical problem. It must develop opinions with a regard to facts. It aims to contribute to a consensus which will serve as a basis for joint action. Its structure as a piece of thinking must therefore be sound.

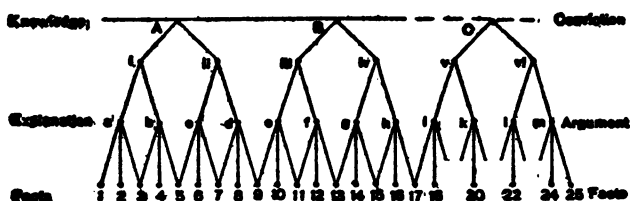
Just what is the basis of all our responsible action?

Knowledge, you will say, and conviction.

Right. And your answer has not really mentioned two kinds of basis, for knowledge and conviction differ only in degree. Knowledge is what you are fully sure of; conviction is what you are enough sure of to act on. Both knowledge and conviction represent an organizing of facts. Where all the relevant facts and their relations have been ascertained, you have knowledge; where only some of the facts and their relations have been ascertained, you have conviction. In the fields of social, political, and industrial policy facts are hard to get at, and we must commonly take action on the basis of conviction as a

makeshift for knowledge. The logical use of discussion is to give conviction something of the reliability of knowledge.

The mind's whole basis for action can be pictured as a platform supported by a sort of mental trestle-work by which facts are brought together into more and more complex interpretations that end in the conceptions we act upon. Thus—



The facts (1, 2, 3, etc.) unite to explain minor parts (*a*, *b*, *c*, etc.), which in turn unite to explain major parts (*i*, *ii*, *iii*, etc.) of the total conceptions (*A*, *B*, *C*, etc.). For example, if *A* represents our conception of the working of an automobile engine, we begin explaining it by pointing to (*i*) the engine-structure and (*ii*) the power-generation. To explain it further we should say that *ii*, for example, involves (*c*) the gas-delivery system and (*d*) the ignition system, and that these finally organize groups of such more or less simple factors as pipe, carburetor, intake, etc.; magneto, leads, spark plug, etc.

The working of an automobile engine is a matter of knowledge: all its factors are accessible and can be

organized with certainty. But how about the working of the "closed shop" in a business? Such a matter involves factors too intangible to be set out in a total assent-compelling view. In such a case we have *rival* explanations, each claiming to fit the *available* facts better than the other does. We then treat the partial facts as *evidence* supporting *contentions* which establish *our conviction* (C), and call the procedure *argument*.

It must be plain that we make progress in an argument, only by building up the trestlework of contentions that supports our conviction. This means that each contention, once it is offered, must get everything said for and against it that will decide us whether or not it really counts as part of the "trestle." If we pass on to new contentions, leaving the first unsettled, we shall end by having *mentioned* a number of arguments without having *proved* anything. The contention, then, is the logical unit of discussion. *Stick to it*, until you and your opponent really know each other's mind *on that point*.

EVERY CONTENTION MUST BE MET

A good rule for keeping talk to the point is that no contention shall be ignored. In every discussion some contentions make for your view of the case, others make against it. When a contention *against* it has been stated, the one profitable thing for the meeting to do is to settle then and there *just how much*

that contention is worth. But this takes effortful thinking to do well. It is much easier to recite another contention that makes *for* your view: to say by implication to your hearers, "Don't look at that (to me) painful picture; look at this (to me) pleasant one."

For example, your meeting is discussing the "closed shop." Your opponent has said that some unions charge such high initiation fees and set up such hard apprenticeship rules that the membership is scarcely replacing itself with new workers. You know that there is *some* truth in that contention. What the meeting wants to know is *just how much it counts against your view.* But you have come prepared to say some fine things about the improved health conditions for cigar-makers under the closed shop. So you talk away on your own different contention. You are forgetting that the strength of the trestlework supporting your whole conviction is assured not by the excellence of this or that piece of timber but *by the mutual buttressing of all the timbers.* Your more intelligent hearers will suspect that you are descanting on this part of your trestlework in order to divert attention from the damage your opponent has done to another part.

Some discussions are condemned from the start to a general talking beside the point. This is because the speakers have not *defined* their subject, and shift as they talk from one implied definition to another.

At a recent debate on the "open shop" the disputants were of course supposed to be examining the case for the shop in which both union and non-union labor is employed (professedly) without discrimination. That alone is what "open shop" correctly means. But the speakers had not gone far before the negative began to show that to them "open shop" meant a non-union shop. As an argument the whole performance got practically nowhere.

Another cause of talking beside the point is a desire to score clever hits or to salve a wounded self-esteem. At the debate on the "open shop" just referred to, a labor representative wasted four minutes of precious time in defending the unions from a slight intimation in what had been said that labor had behaved unpatriotically during the war.

The practical importance of this little survey of the "trestlework" of reasoning can now be summed up:—

1. It is not the *number* of contentions but their *bracing force* that counts.
2. It takes time and pains really to show where in a contention has, or lacks, bracing force.
3. Do not spend in *multiplying* contentions time that you need for proving or disproving a contention that "has the floor."

HOW TO TEST A CONTENTION

A contention is a statement of opinion offered in argument. In order to count for anything it must satisfy three tests: viz.—

1. *It must be "relevant."* It must bear on the precise subject of dispute. Otherwise it is "beside the point."
2. *It must be important.* It must express a cause or a consequence that seriously affects the acceptability of the conviction at stake.
3. *It must be true.*

In a debate on the "open shop" (employing—professedly without discrimination—both union and non-union labor) the contention that workers can sign individual contracts only to their disadvantage is but doubtfully "relevant." It is important, and it is probably true; but it seems hardly "in point," because in a true "open shop" nobody is obliged to sign an individual contract. So far as the employer is concerned any worker can avoid that disadvantage by joining the union. The contention would be "relevant" in a debate on the closed shop or on the non-union shop. It would of course apply to a shop falsely called "open" but really non-union.

In debating the "closed shop" the contention that in some unions the local business agent interferes officiously in shop affairs is but doubtfully important. It is relevant, and doubtless true; but it does not affect the *principle* of the closed shop, because tactless and meddlesome officials are not *regular* features of labor unions.

In the same debate the contention that unions are indifferent to efficiency is relevant, and important, but it is only doubtfully true.

These three tests, then, show exactly what work is cut out for a speaker when he either advances or opposes a contention. Untrained or partisan-minded speakers seem to think that their point is made when they have merely asserted it in bold, dogmatic tones, and they have all the sensations of proving their point when they have merely repeated it more vehemently or in different words. The competent and honest disputant, on the other hand, recognizes frankly that every contention is doubtable on at least one score: on that of its relevance, its importance, or its truth. And he will stick to that doubtable aspect until all has been said that needs to be said to dispose of it one way or the other.

HOW TO FORESEE THE FORTUNES OF AN ARGUMENT

Sticking to the point is easier to the speaker who has in mind a little forecast of the possibilities ahead in dealing with his contention. All its possible fortunes can in fact be set out as follows:—

STAGE I. It is asserted, presumably with the reason for it.

STAGE II. Its truth must be either conceded or denied.

If conceded as true,—that is, *admitted*, it must (if the argument is to continue) be shown to be either

unimportant or irrelevant to the question. If denied, it must be either *refuted* with counter-contention, or else *granted*,—that is, “admitted for the argument’s sake.” In the latter case it must be shown to be either unimportant or irrelevant.

STAGE III. If the original contention has been refuted, it must now be either supported by rebuttal or relinquished (by admitting or granting). If it has been admitted or granted, three possibilities remain: (1) the disputants may agree that the contention was irrelevant to their main question, and mutually drop it as *extraneous*; (2) they may agree that it was unimportant to their question, and drop it as *waived*; (3) they may disagree as to its relevance or importance, and proceed to dispute not its truth but its *value as an argument*.

Knowing in advance what your opponent *must* argue, you can at once save the meeting’s time and steal your opponent’s thunder by *anticipating his best course* with the disputed contention. Try to simplify the issue *by conceding as much as you can*. This keeps the clash of opinion concentrated on essentials. Only so can the debate make progress.

Particularly when you are attacking another’s conception of the case, remember our trestlework figure. You will not break down a trestle by delivering a fine whack or two each at a dozen different timbers. *Look for a main prop, keep whacking at that, and the whole thing will crash.*

SUGGESTED EXERCISE

Let the class take a general contention and improvise a dialogue between A and B, by which an argument upon it would be carried through. For each statement and answer note whether "relevance," importance, or truth is in question, and exactly how much gets conceded.

Examples of general contention are:—

1. A worker should not be compelled to join a union in order to get employment.
2. An employer should not have to negotiate questions of hours and pay with men outside of his employee group.

CHAPTER V

HOW FACT AND OPINION COUNT IN ARGUMENT

You are now in a position to display good generalship in argument.

You realize that a speech which argues on half a dozen points without clinching a single one is simply delaying the real work of discussion.

You know better than to spend time arguing whether or not a contention is true when it may be irrelevant or unimportant.

Your next step is to become a skillful critic of truth-values in argument. This requires some attention to the *kinds of statement* that pass between people when there is imperfect knowledge on both sides.

If you are a watchmaker and I have never looked into a watch, you may *explain* a watch-movement to me, but we shall hardly argue. The situation is one of knowledge confronting ignorance, of the expert enlightening the tyro. All the talk will consist in *statements of fact* by the former modestly accepted by the latter. But if you and I both know something about watches, and the watch-movement before us looks to you American-made and to me Swiss-made,

we shall fall into argument. Our talk will then consist partly of statements of fact,—of matters which we both *know*, and partly of *statements of opinion*,—of matters which we diversely *believe*, and which each expects to prove to the other.

MAKE YOURSELF AWARE OF THE GROUNDS FOR ASSENT

In order to criticize the truth-value of a statement you must realize just *what kind of bid* it is making for your acceptance. Does it ask us simply to register assent to certainty? Does it ask us to perform a responsible act of inference? Or does it ask for an act of faith?

Since every statement may be said to express a belief, let us begin this little study of statements with a couple of practical distinctions in matters of belief:—

A *fact* is any matter of belief that can be affirmed with certainty; an *opinion* is any matter of mere belief. When a contractor states that the jurisdictional rules in the building trades assign the setting of steel sashes in iron frames to the iron workers and in masonry to the carpenters, he states what he can expect to pass unchallenged. The rules are set down in black and white, and any doubter can verify the statement with a little trouble. But when the man states further that jurisdictional disputes are the chief cause of hostile public opinion towards trade-unionism, he is stating opinion. He *believes* these

disputes to be the chief cause, but only a nation-wide investigation could verify his belief. You and I may accept his belief as *plausible*, but are aware that it does not stand as something *proved*.

The certainty that distinguishes fact and opinion is of course rarely *absolute*. I have not myself seen the jurisdictional rule about the setting of steel sashes in their frames, so that although I may offer that statement fully expecting it to pass unchallenged as a fact, there is just a possibility that my expectation is mistaken, that some one will raise a question whether the rule says exactly what the contractor stated. This "relativity" of facts ought never to be forgotten in dispute. Untrained thinkers do forget it. They get heated when any one questions what they have offered as a statement of fact, because they can understand the doubt only as attaching to their veracity.

A statement of opinion, it should be noticed, may offer either of two quite different grounds for your assent. My statement "that jurisdictional disputes cost labor unions the good will of the public" *expresses an inference that I invite you to draw* from a variety of instances and impressions. But the statement "that building trades labor in 1920, according to the National Credit Association report, was notoriously inefficient" simply *quotes an inference already drawn*—by the Association's director of research. The first statement appeals to your logic; the second appeals to your faith. In accepting the first

you run the risk of *fallacy*—of some mistake in the interpreting of causes and effects; in accepting the second you run the risk of *credulity*—of too trusting a faith in somebody else's say-so. These two risks of opinion you can hardly eliminate. But as a good critic of opinion you can minimize them.

DECIDE WHERE CAUTION MATTERS

The total picture of the logical underpinning of a conviction was shown in p. 61 to be a sort of converging trestlework of opinions erected upon a set of facts. Viewed as a fabric of belief created by joint discussion it can be described as a composite conclusion (*C*) which splits up into general contentions (*v, vi*), which in turn split up into more specific contentions (*i, k, l, m*), which once more split up into statements of detail (17, 18, 20, etc.).

If you are to criticize the logical soundness of this fabric, you must look first at its bottom. Just what does "evidence" mean?

Evidence is what is offered *as fact* by way of proof. If anybody challenges it, we can assert it no longer as fact, but as opinion which itself requires proof. Evidence is of two kinds according to its *sources*:—

(1) *Material evidence* is derived from one's own sense-observation. When I seek, by putting on a new coat before your eyes, to prove that my tailor has given me a bad fit, I am using material evidence.

(2) *Testimonial evidence* is derived from other

witnesses. When I seek, by quoting a cloth-dealer's price-list, to prove that the tailor has over-charged me, I am using testimonial evidence.

Both material and testimonial evidence may be either "direct" or "indirect," according to its *application*. This distinction has a bearing on the risks of credulity.

(1) *Direct evidence* is evidence applied to the statement that is the main matter of dispute.

(2) *Indirect evidence* is evidence applied to a statement which, if true, goes to prove the main matter of dispute.

For example, if the main statement in dispute is that "Wytown's present government is wasteful," we should use direct testimony if we quote the present mayor as saying so; we should use indirect testimony to it if we quote a statement that aldermen bargain with one another in awarding the city contracts,—because this would go to prove the wastefulness of Wytown's present government.

Where, now, does the use of evidence call for special caution?

Let us illustrate. Suppose the "conviction" under dispute is the merits of the city manager plan of town government. The conviction has been put concretely as a *proposition*.—

"The city manager plan would work better in Wytown than the present plan with mayor, aldermen, etc."

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This proposition is supported by three main contentions:—

- i. The city manager plan would give more efficient public service.
- ii. It would be more economical with the public funds.
- iii. It would be equally amenable to the citizens' control.

Each main contention is supported by "sub-contentions." Thus contention i (on efficiency) is supported by—

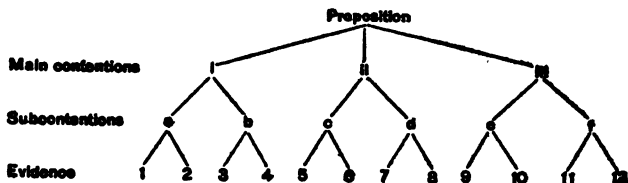
- a. The proposed plan will attract a higher grade of men into office

and by other sub-contentions. Each of these, in turn, is supported by evidence. Thus sub-contention "a" above is supported by—

1. The plan relieves the city accountant of petty interference

and by other evidence.

The whole argument can be mapped out by the trestlework pattern. Thus—



Logically this pattern means that the truth of the proposition follows from the truth of i, ii, and iii;

that the truth of *i* follows from that of *a* and *b*; that the truth of *a* follows from that of 1 and 2; and so on with *ii* and *iii*.

Now we could, of course, simply accept the truth of "*i*" on the strength of some authority's "say-so." If we did, we should cut out all the argument represented by *a*, *b*, 1, 2, 3, 4. We should be abdicating all that thinking in his favor and trusting him for the soundness of one-third of the whole case. That, of course, would be to take a very large risk of credulity. But we can accept the truth of *a* (indirect evidence for *i*) with much less risk. We should, indeed, cut out the thinking represented by 1 and 2, but if we turn out to have accepted an error, we shall have gone wrong by only one-sixth of the whole case. The truth of 1, in turn, we can accept with no more caution than is called for by ordinary good sense. Its *use* as indirect evidence for *a* may need scrutiny, but its *truth* is not likely to have been warped by prejudice, since it need not have been said originally with reference to the present controversy at all; and in any case if it turns out to be an error, it puts us in the wrong by only one-twelfth of the whole case.

Our caution as to *direct testimony*, then, should come to something like this:—

1. A main contention we should not accept on direct testimony at all.
2. A sub-contention, only with great caution.

3. A statement of evidential fact, with some readiness of good faith.

HOW TO DEAL WITH TESTIMONY

Of the two kinds of evidence, material and testimonial, the latter is far the more important in all arguments on social issues. A good critic of argument, therefore, must know how to test the reliability of opinion quoted as evidence.

Testimony is *authoritative* opinion: it proceeds from a *responsible* witness—one aware that the reliability of his observations and inferences is at stake.

As an average member of the community I express many opinions which I do not expect to derive any special weight from the fact that they are mine. My opinion that a guild plan for coal mining would work well may turn out to be a mistaken one. In that case I shall not hang my head, for I claim no special qualifications for the opinion and expect no one to quote it as evidence. But my opinion that grammar should be taught intensively as high-school logic and not strung along through the grades is an opinion that will discredit my judgment if it turns out to be a mistaken one; for as an English teacher I claim special qualifications for forming this opinion and expect it to be worth something as evidence in a controversy.

To attack testimony is to try to reduce it to the rank of irresponsible opinion. Any criticism of testi-

mony must have to do with two conditions of its reliability: the witness' *competence* and his *prejudice*. As to his competency we ask two questions:

- (1) Has he the knowledge and training that his statement presupposes?
- (2) Has he really applied his special fitness in forming *this* opinion.

In using a man's opinion as evidence we often overlook the possibility that although he may be an expert in the general subject, he may not have taken the trouble to qualify himself for making *the specific statement* in question. As to a witness' prejudice, also, we ask two questions:

- (1) Do his feelings distort his testimony in the direction of what he *wants* to believe?
- (2) Does his testimony actually run counter to his own sympathies?

In the first case we must discount exaggerations in his statement; in the second we must give the statement special credit, since the truth appears to have been too strong for his prejudice to warp.

In this chapter you have begun to be a critic of argument.

1. You have distinguished the very different *grounds* for accepting statements—the grounds of established fact, of logical inference, and of faith in authority.
2. You have observed that the risk of credulity

in accepting testimony is greater when the testimony bears directly on the issue than when it bears indirectly.

3. You have learned to put the test questions which minimize the risk of credulity.

In the next two chapters you will learn to minimize the risks of false inference.

SUGGESTED EXERCISES

What inferences would you expect to find supported by the following evidence derived from an investigation and published in 1921 by a Committee of Twenty-five of the Philadelphia Central Labor Union?—

Philadelphia is the largest textile center in the United States, producing twice the volume of goods of its nearest competitor—Lawrence—totaling about one-quarter of the output of the entire country. The mills, however, are mostly family affairs: close corporations or partnerships that have come down from father to son since the time when the English mill owners founded the industry there in the early 1800's. The workers, too, have come into their estate in much the same way. Most of them are sons of mothers and fathers who worked in the mills. Most of them are Americans born of Scotch-Irish and English descent. Only 14.8 per cent of the 60,500 are foreign born.

The wage of the average textile worker in 1915

was only \$411 per year—\$542 below the minimum amount necessary to support a normal family in health and decency at that time. In 1919 the average wage had increased to \$943, but the prices of necessities had increased faster and the living wage level had reached \$1,803. In other words, the textile workers were \$328 farther from the possibility of healthful and decent living in 1919 than they were in 1915. Complete figures for 1920 are not available, but investigation among the textile workers reveals the fact that 1920 wages were considerably less than 1919, owing to the shut-down of the mills in the late summer and fall and the consequent widespread unemployment. The situation for the workers is highly critical. They are already suffering from undernourishment, lack of sufficient clothing, and wholesale evictions from their homes.

The mill owners, however, have prospered. In 1915 the total net profits of the 605 plants were \$30,169,700—36 per cent on invested capital and 28 per cent on cost of production. In 1916 profits jumped to 73 per cent on the capital; in 1917 to 89 per cent, and in 1918 they totaled, for 636 plants, \$148,235,700 or 117 per cent on the capital and 81 per cent on cost of production. The 1919 figures were slightly lower—95 per cent on capital and 59 per cent on cost of production.

In the five-year period for which complete statistics are available the average net profit per plant had

increased 327 per cent, while the average wage increased but 128 per cent.

In 1918, for instance, the mill owners might have given each worker an average wage of \$3,949 or about \$62 a week for 52 weeks and yet have had enough left out of the profits of that year to keep for themselves 6 per cent on the capital they invested in their business. Instead of this, however, they pocketed among themselves some \$148,235,000 and gave each worker \$792, or about \$15 a week. Or, the owners might have raised the wages of the average worker merely to the living wage level of \$1,632 and then have reduced the price of textile products to the consumer an average of 21 per cent and still received their six per cent in dividends. As a matter of fact clothing in Philadelphia advanced in price, according to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, some 40 per cent during the year 1918.

What differences in their claim upon assent can you point out in the various statements of opinion in the following pronouncement upon picketing by Chief Justice Taft?—

“The plaintiff’s business is a property right,” [the plaintiff in this instance conducted a restaurant] “and free access by employes, owners and customers to their place of business is incident in such right. Intentional injury caused to either right or both by a conspiracy is a tort. Concert of action is a conspiracy

if its object is unlawful or if the means used are unlawful. . . . [In this instance] it was not lawful persuasion or inducing. It was not a mere appeal to the sympathetic aid of would-be customers by a simple statement of the effect of the strike and a request to withhold patronage. It was compelling every customer, or would-be customer, to run the gantlet of most uncomfortable publicity, aggressive and annoying importunity, libelous attacks, and fear of injurious consequences. No wonder that a business of \$50,000 was reduced to only one-fourth of its former extent. Violence could not have been more effective. It was moral coercion by illegal annoyance and obstruction and it was thus plainly a conspiracy."

CHAPTER VI

'ARGUING FROM CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

You are now ready to deal with argument that makes special demands upon *reasoning*.

Since in any discussion you and your opponent are really engaged in setting out rival ideas with a view to their practical leadings, you must be keenly alert to the logic of explanation.

Just what is done in *explaining* anything?

If I would offer the plan of commission government for a town meeting to accept, I should probably show the *parts* of that plan in detail, its *likeness* to some familiar industrial plan, and its expected good-*effects* in the town administration. This would be "explaining" the commission plan, and I should be using three kinds of logical relation to do it; namely—

- (1) The relation of part to whole;
- (2) The relation of likeness (and difference);
- (3) The relation of effect to cause.

The most practically impressive of these relations is the third, which sets out into view the effects (results,

consequences) of the plan. Indeed, the significance of the other two relations lies in their bearing upon the third. The *parts* of the plan are significant in that they appear as *causes* of specific desired effects. The *likeness* of the plan to some familiar industrial organization is significant, because the similar features in the latter are known to show similar desired effects. The whole process of explaining, therefore, consists in leading the mind to grasp a set of cause-effect relations by which something *works*.

Notice that in reasoning the mind is dealing with what things do,—with processes and ordered occurrences. *A cause is that from which something necessarily follows.* In thinking from cause to effect or from effect to cause our minds take a step from the known to the not-yet-known. This step is called *inference*. By inference we make items of fact from the past yield expectations upon which we venture into the future. The *facts* of the future have not yet dawned for us, but their causes are with us now, and can be adjusted towards desired ends, if we have the clear-headedness to trace them out.

THE THREE KINDS OF CAUSES

The word “cause” is popularly used very loosely. One so-called “cause” may account for its effect far more fully than another does. The stroke of a billiard cue, as the “cause” of the ball’s motion accounts for its direction, its speed, its duration, and

its spin: that is, it accounts for both the quantity and the quality of the effect. The pushing of a button, as the "cause" of a bell's ringing, accounts for neither quantity nor quality of the effect: a pushed button may equally well light up a room, start the machinery of a World's Fair, or explode a mine. The unwinding spring of a victrola, as the "cause" of the music accounts for the quantity of the effect but not for its quality, which may be either symphony or "jazz."

In the first case we have a real "producing cause"; in the second, a mere "releasing cause"; in the third, a "transmitting cause." Only the first can be said to "explain" a given consequence; the second and third only take part in explaining it.

Such distinctions ought to warn us, to begin with, not to think we can really explain anything merely by mentioning a "cause." *How much* of a cause does it count for? Untrained thinkers tend to assume in every new state of affairs that there is one master cause of the "producing" type. If it is a question of the cost of living, they can talk only about the food-cornering packers; if it is a decline in trade, they point triumphantly to the tariff; if it is a world war, they dilate on the militaristic Kaiser. In questions of conduct the vogue of melodramatic "movies" has addled all our thinking by thus oversimplifying matters of right and wrong. The antisocial conduct of the villain is so crudely and palpably a "producing

cause" of mischief that we complacently overlook the amiable and genteel little antisocialisms of the heroine, which are perhaps more prolific as mischief-breeders in the world about us.

What we really have, in any large result, is the working not of a single knock-out cause but of a web of cause-effect relations among which figure causes of all three types. Even so apparently simple a total result as the billiard ball's motion is not wholly accounted for by its "producing" cause, the stroke of the player's cue. It is at least conditioned and partly determined by the makeup of the billiard table, and the position of other balls. And in the field of social, political, and industrial forces, where human motives are factors, the network of causes and effects can be very complex. Serious modern plays—such as John Galsworthy's "Strife" and "The Silver Box"—show many social mischiefs to be the products not of single acts or character-traits but of "frame-ups" in the ways of society. "Once get a man started down hill," said Josh Billings, "and all nature seems greased for the occasion!"

HOW TO DEAL WITH ARGUMENT THAT TURNS ON CAUSES

With the foregoing bit of theory you are prepared to deal critically with any appeal to *causes* as justifying conclusions.

Notice first that what is really a "causal" argument

often appears in a moral ¹ guise. Instead of a contention that "this is (or is not) so" you have a contention that "this ought (or ought not) to be done." Such a contention commonly puts the "moral" question as one of two kinds:—

(1) It puts a question of *merit*; or

(2) It puts a question of *policy*.

Suppose you are arguing *who is to blame* for a strike of street-railwaymen in your town. No cars are running; the "public" is getting about as best it can by walking and jitney-service; business is stalled; little knots of idle conductors and motormen gather here and there; everybody is exasperated. The question, as everybody expresses it, seems to be, "are not the carmen guilty of antisocial conduct?"

Or suppose you are arguing *how just is the claim* of coal miners for an increase in pay. The cost of coal enters into the cost of pretty much everything, so that the pay of miners presents itself as a claim on everybody. The "public" becomes disposed to compare the pick worker's wage with the wages of other workers, and with the salary of the mining engineer and the dividend of the mine investor. The question, as everybody expresses it, seems to be, "Do the miners deserve the increase?"

Both of these are questions of merit.

Suppose again that you are arguing *why labor should form* a political party. Here it is not a matter

¹ Sometimes, in questions of taste, in an aesthetic guise.

of right and wrong, nor of desert. It is a matter of choice between alternative courses of action. As generally expressed the question seems to be, "Would a labor party be expedient?"

In all such arguments you will *lay the issues more open to inspection by translating "moral" terms into causal terms.*

The "blame" for a strike can be profitably discussed only in terms of specific acts that are largely the resultant of conditions, some within and some beyond the actor's control. The "justice" of a claim for pay can practically and responsibly be analyzed only in terms of certain facts about industry and the division of its proceeds which work as "economic laws." Even if some of these "laws" have human motives as causal factors, their moral character will have to be established in terms of effects on human well-being. So also the "expediency" of a labor party can be debated only by showing certain aims of labor—union recognition, a nation-wide eight-hour day, a standard minimum of provision for health and security, the nationalization of railroads and coal mines—to be consequences that cannot be made to follow from strikes or from dickerings with the bosses of property-controlled parties.

The next step in a causal argument is to *get all the causal factors into the picture.*

Most discussion of the causes for desired or undesired social results suffers from the neglect of the

disputants to bring the whole cluster of operative forces and conditions into view. Certain factors are uppermost or are nearest to immediate interests, and get the whole attention in debate, while other factors that either enhance, thwart, supplement, or offset the former pass unmentioned.

For example, many people would see collective bargaining in a more sympathetic light if they would only note *all* the elements of handicap in the worker's situation, even when he is organized. They readily see that his independence to take a job or to leave it is the necessary condition of any "bargain"; that equal "bargaining power" between employer and worker depends on the employer needing the worker as much as the worker needs the job; that when unorganized the worker cannot make himself acutely needed. But people overlook three factors of bargaining power in which organization does not confer equality upon the worker. They are—

- (1) The staying power to hold out for one's terms;
- (2) Accord in leadership for one's forces;
- (3) Public good will towards one's cause.

Note how employer and worker compare in respect of these three factors of power:—

- (1) The employer can wait for his profits; the worker can't wait for his wages. In bargaining for the terms on which the job is to be taken the employer

can profitably hold his resources idle for months, if he thereby secures terms that reimburse him. The worker can seldom hold out so firmly. His resources are his own and his family's health and comfort, which suffer when he is idle. Strike benefits give him some, but hardly equal, staying power.

(2) The employer wields a force that is concentrated within a few heads; the labor-leader wields a force that is diffused among a thousand. A dozen directors, sitting around a table, wield a united capital-power completely delegated to them by the stockholders. The compactness of their group secures mutual understanding, prompt decision, and loyalty in sustaining an agreed course of action. A group of labor-leaders has no such command of labor power. A thousand heads must assent to its decisions and can be kept in accord only at the cost of endless persuasion. And even then its course of action may be discredited by uncontrollable hot-heads. In leadership that really leads the employer surely has a superior power.

(3) In a strike affecting the public the employer acts behind the scenes; the worker acts in the public eye. Sitting in his office and merely saying "No" to demands, the employer acts as the unobserved "releasing cause" of the strike and its consequent annoyances. The workers, on the other hand, throwing down their tools and walking the streets, impress the public as the active "producing cause" of the trouble.

No wonder that the employer has an advantage over the worker in enlisting public sympathy.

This example is enough to show that when you proceed to argue on the *grounds* for any far-reaching policy, you make your case cogent only by drawing its whole causal framework into the light.

The final step in a causal argument is to *discriminate the causal values*.

The "value" of a cause depends on—

- (1) The forces that are summed up in its action;
- (2) The degree in which it is enhanced or thwarted by given conditions.

Suppose you are arguing the question, What apportionment of the price of a ton of coal, sold at the pit's mouth, should go to the shareholder, to the engineer, to the mine worker, and (in England) to the nobleman who owns the coal-lands? Where sharing a product is in question, it is easy to fall into thinking that the *necessity* of one productive factor constitutes a special claim for its share—into thinking, for example, that the mine worker should have higher pay because his work is just as *necessary* as the engineer's. All the causes of this product—natural resources, capital, management, and labor—are equally necessary to it, but when it comes to *rating* their parts, we have to note that what seems a simple cause may be a complex of further causal factors. Thus, the engineer's part is itself a product of special quali-

fications that represent years and money, where the unskilled worker's part represents no such investment. And the nobleman's part, where the coal land is part of his ancient family estate, is no more than that of a "releasing cause,"—his permission to let the active causes proceed.

When you are arguing that an eight-hour day would solve the domestic servant problem, you have to reckon with enhancing or thwarting conditions. If the eight hours are distributed in a way to cut off a girl's companionship with her friends at their free hours, or if they are subject to change at her mistress' convenience, the eight-hour day will not suffice to bring girls into domestic service.

It is evident that in dealing with argument that turns on causes the danger of false inference lies in mental laziness—in the tendency to treat complex matters as if they were simple and could be understood without thoughtful scrutiny.

HOW TO TEST A PROPOSAL BY QUESTIONS OF CAUSE AND EFFECT

Since in the field of social and political activities any contemplated result may spring from two or more alternative causes, and any contemplated cause may branch out into two or more results, we must scrutinize any proposed measure according to the following causal scheme:—



If the desired consequence is the safety of American lives and property in Mexico and the proposed measure is the establishment of an American protectorate over the country, we must settle three questions before we shall arrive at a total view of the case:—

1. Is the measure really adequate (under the conditions) to cause what is desired?

Possible thwarting conditions are the wildness and sparse settlement in parts of the country and the natural resentment of the natives for foreign control.

2. Will the measure, while causing the desired consequence, incidentally cause an undesired one?

An American protectorate, while successfully protecting lives and property in Mexico, might at the same time destroy the good will of all the southern republics towards the United States. To them it would mean that our foreign policy was being dictated by our financial imperialists, whose ambitions they have reason to fear.

3. Will some other measure bring the desired consequence without carrying so undesirable an incidental consequence?

This question obliges us to entertain the possible alternatives to a protectorate. The United States might help the Mexican government with finances and supplies to develop its railways and other resources for a stable order; or we might establish a joint protectorate over Mexico in which the South

American republics would share. Notice that such alternative proposals need not profess to involve *no* undesirable consequences. They need claim only *less* undesirable ones so long as they are *equally* adequate to cause the desired safety of property and life.

Good books to read on the logic of causes and consequences are:—

How We Think, by John Dewey (D. C. Heath and Co.).

The Application of Logic, by Alfred Sidgwick (Macmillan).

SUGGESTED EXERCISE

Let the class take a general question of policy and make it specific by applying it to a given case—familiar enough to be understandingly discussed. Before beginning the argument (1) get *all the causal factors* that the students can think of set out on a blackboard or on their note-tablets; (2) decide on the *order* for discussing them that makes a logical progress with the whole question.

An example might be the question of the eight-hour day as it would apply to a neighboring factory. In using quoted evidence look for *suggested* but unmentioned causal items. Thus in the following evidence is fatigue the only causal item involved?

An official summary of *Public Health Bulletin No. 106* states:—

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"The 8-hour day is not only more efficient than the 10-hour day in industrial plants, but is more economical.

"This is the conclusion reached by the United States Public Health Service after a careful detailed study of conditions and production in standard factories of both classes, which has been under way since 1917.

"The plants surveyed were selected after a great deal of care. Each is a modern factory, employing such a large number of workers as to make any conclusions reached apply to industry in general. The other consideration was that the machinery, manufactured product and processes in the 10-hour plant should be sufficiently similar to the 8-hour plant to make a fair comparison.

"The advantages are all in favor of 8-hour days, or shifts, as compared with the 10-hour day, and relate to maintenance of output, to lost time and to industrial accidents.

"Maintenance of output: The outstanding feature of the 8-hour day is steady maintenance of output. The outstanding feature of the 10-hour system is the decline of output.

"Lost time: Under the 8-hour system work with almost full power begins and ends approximately on schedule, and lost time is reduced to a minimum. Under the 10-hour system work ceases regularly before the end of the spell and lost time is frequent.

"Stereotyped output: Under the 10-hour system the laborers seem to artificially restrict their efforts and to keep pace with the less efficient workers. Under the 8-hour day the output varies more nearly according to the individual capacity of the laborer. That is: each is more likely to do his utmost, rather than an "average day's work," regulated by a low standard.

"Industrial accidents: This phase of the study is of particular interest. Ordinarily accidents may be expected to vary directly with speed of production, owing to increased exposure to risk. But when fatigue is taken into consideration, there is a marked modification of this rule. When there is a reduction of output due to fatigue, there is a rise in the number of accidents; that is, in the last hours of the 10- or 12-hour day, in spite of employees slowing up in work, more accidents occur. If for any reason production is speeded up in the last hours, when the laborers are fatigued, the number of accidents rises so rapidly as to leave no room to doubt that the higher accident risk accompanies the decline in working capacity of the employee."

If the eight-hour day for the factory under discussion is best for everybody concerned, must not such items as seasonal demand for its product, competition with plants in regions of cheap labor, etc., be taken into the "total picture" of causes and consequences?

CHAPTER VII

HOW TO AVERT THE MISLEADINGS OF WORDS

You have now learned to regard argument as an effort to arrive at a working conviction,—at an approximation to knowledge where really assured knowledge is not to be had.

You have learned to deal with two forms of argument: with the appeal to testimony and with the appeal to causal inference.

You can now observe that these two forms of argument represent minimum and maximum approaches to knowledge.

Argument from causes to consequences and vice versa can often yield a proof that is almost as safe as knowledge. For example, where a factory is small, where its employees are not divided by race or by social organizations, and are strong enough to hold their own as trade unionists, one could prove that a "shop committee" plan of negotiation between them and their employers would produce improved relations, simply by setting out features of the plan and showing how they would cause features of coöpera-

tion. We should not indeed *know* that the shop committee plan would make the improvements:—only its actual trial would yield knowledge. But we should get assurance enough to act on, and that is all we can ask from our social and political debates.

On the other hand argument from direct testimony yields almost nothing as an approach to knowledge. If one should argue that the shop committee plan would produce improved relations in Smith, Brown & Co.'s factory because Mr. Stoddard, an authority on the subject, says it would, we might, indeed, be willing to act on faith in Mr. Stoddard's knowledge, but our own insight into the workableness of shop committees would not have been advanced one jot.

All this means that you will try to make your own contribution appeal, wherever possible, to causes and consequences. You will appeal freely to testimony on *details* that you can then use as causal evidence for your contention, but you will appeal to testimony on the value of your whole contention only where you are too ignorant of the details to offer anything better. Now, it will often happen that although you do not (perhaps cannot) know causal details that would give a maximum proof, you can still make out an argument of some convincingness by *appealing to a general rule*. If, for example, you believe that a shop committee plan would give Smith, Brown & Co. the right medium for adjusting grievances you may find it impossible to show, in so complex a matter,

how such and such features of the plan would bring about such and such features of adjustment. But you can make out a very fair case for your opinion if you show, from the records of shop committee operation throughout the country, *that shop-committee-managed factories as a class have satisfactory grievance-adjustment.*

The worth of your argument lies in this, that the agreement, in satisfactory grievance-adjusting, among so many factories, differing in all ways except in belonging to the shop-committee class, *creates a presumption* that it is the shop committee plan that causes the satisfactory adjustments. The rule *suggests* where the causes lie, even though we cannot put our finger on them. Between the appeal to causes, with its maximum approach to knowledge, and the appeal to direct testimony, with its minimum approach, we have, in the appeal to general rules, a sort of middling approach to knowledge.

HOW REASONING APPEALS TO GENERAL RULES

In a broad sense all our reasoning appeals to general rules. When a man says, "Those who talk against the government should be deported because they are anarchists," he is appealing to the assumed rule: "anarchists are to be deported." When a school-boy says "diamonds will burn because carbon burns," he is stating a rule about carbon and implying that diamonds are a particular case of carbon

substances. In logic the formal statement of a piece of reasoning, by which the conclusion is shown to be a particular case of an accepted general rule, is called a "syllogism." Thus we have a syllogism in—

- (1) Carbon burns; (the general rule)
- (2) diamonds are carbon; (the particular case)
- (3) hence, diamonds burn; (the conclusion)

Observe that the syllogism involves three terms: *diamonds, carbon, burn*. They are named in logic—

S, the subject of the conclusion (here, *diamonds*)

P, the predicate of the conclusion (here, *burn*)

M, the middle term (here *carbon*)

Hence, the abstract formula for a syllogism is—

M is P (the “major premise,” putting the general rule)

S is M (the "minor premise," putting the particular case)

S is P (the conclusion)

In actual talk we rarely express both premises, since either can be gathered when the other is expressed with the conclusion; thus—

- (1) Beer is harmful, since it is an intoxicant.
[Major premise implied.]
- (2) Beer is harmful, since all intoxicants are.
[Minor premise implied.]

The syllogism as the pattern form of any piece of reasoning has this use, that it lays the reasoning open to inspection when we are suspicious of its soundness. Doubt as to its soundness can of course attach to either premise, so that we have two questions to ask when we criticize it: viz.—

- (1) Is M necessarily P? (Are intoxicants necessarily harmful?)
- (2) Is S really M? (Is beer really an intoxicant?)

Since these questions inevitably underlie much of the work of discussion, even when nobody formally asks them, the student must get an accurate notion of what they involve.

The first question (Is M necessarily P?) tests the general rule or "generalization." It is common enough to find that what has been offered as a generalization about a class of instances does not hold good. Its author has either observed the instances carelessly, or has regarded too few of them to warrant his sweeping inference about the class. The generalization that "shop-committee managed factories (M) have satisfactory grievance-adjustment (P)" is not justified if the factories of this class have not been competently observed in considerable numbers, or if serious exceptions have been disregarded. Insofar as there appear among them instances of disharmony the presumption that the shop-

committee plan works for satisfying adjustments grows doubtful, and the rule loses its value for argument.

HOW WORDS MISLEAD IN THE APPLICATION OF RULES

The second question (Is S really M?) tests the rule's applicability to the particular case. It deserves the student's special concern since it draws attention to pitfalls in discussion that lurk behind our use of language. Untrained disputants talk ahead on the assumption that words and phrases of general application—such terms as *animal*, *hot-water bottle*, *anarchist*, *child labor*, *employee*—always have precisely the same meaning wherever they may occur. As a matter of fact all general terms are names for *kinds* of thing that in spite of differences are viewed as “essentially” alike—essentially, that is, to the interest that prompts us to classify them. The term *animal*, for example, names a general kind of thing that in its particular cases shows differences so marked as those between a jelly-fish and a horse. For the *scientific* purpose that prompts us to classify all these things as “animals” in distinction from “plants” the differences between a jelly-fish and a horse are not essential. But for any given *practical* purpose we may use the term “animal” loosely, in spite of the fact that for the present purpose the differences between a jelly-fish and a horse become essential.

For example, we have a law that forbids "cruelty to animals." Under that law a restaurant-keeper in Boston was once prosecuted for broiling lobsters alive. The court's decision in the case was for acquittal, on the ground that "a lobster is not an animal":—namely, that the law forbidding the infliction of pain upon "animals" was prompted by a regard for horses, dogs, cats, etc., and not by a tenderness for lobsters, jelly-fishes, sponges, and other creatures too deficient in nerves to suffer much. Here, then, the descriptive name *animal* that satisfied a scientific interest, proved misleading when the interest was practical.

In the same way a name may satisfy one practical interest but not another. For certain purposes a thermos flask is a "hot-water bottle," but not for the purpose expressed in the rule "hot-water bottles are foot-warmers." It is thus always possible that our present use of a classifying term is prompted by an interest in features different from those that originally gave the term. One might suppose that "child-labor" describes once for all bread-winning work by children in distinction from schooling, play, or household "chores." But when the law against child-labor was invoked to forbid children from acting for pay in the theaters, the term immediately became a point of dispute. Those who had invoked the law pointed out that daily acting by children under contract for pay was undoubtedly "child-

labor." Their opponents insisted that the law had regard only to bread-winning work in shops and factories, under conditions hurtful to children's health or education.

Such illustrations—and public discussion abounds in them—show that it is never enough simply to bring up an accepted rule, state your case as a particular application of it, and then leave it to the syllogism to compel assent. What happens here is that the "middle term" means one thing in the major premise and something slightly different in the minor premise, so that the syllogism works like a scissors with blades which don't quite meet. The rule is acceptable—

(1) Child-labor (M) is unlawful (P)

The application is true enough—

(2) Paid child-acting (S) is child-labor (M)

But the conclusion—

(3) Paid child-acting (S) is unlawful (P)

does not follow if "child-labor" implies *shop* labor in (1), and not in (2). Expressed logically it is a case where "S is not M *in the sense of M that is P.*"

So we may agree to the rule that "anarchists should be deported," but when one says "Kropotkin is an anarchist," we shall hardly conclude to deport Kropotkin if it is pointed out to us that *anarchist* is here used first in the sense of "one who incites to

violence against the United States government" and then in the sense of "one who holds that the ideal community will need no political government." In this case again the middle term (*anarchist*) is "ambiguous"—that is, carries different implications—and holds up the reasoning until we can agree upon a definition for it and then *mean* that definition in both premises. A short time ago the term *employee* became an upsetting "ambiguous middle" in the city of Boston. A Massachusetts law says in effect that "employees have the right to organize for collective bargaining." Now the police of Boston are indisputably "employees," but their claim to the right to unionize was denied on the ground that as "officials" they are not employees in the sense intended by the law.

Not only nouns like *anarchist*, *child-labor*, *employee* can thus play us false with double meanings, but adjectives and verbs as well. Mary may be the *brightest* girl in the *brightest* class in school without being the *brightest* girl in the school, simply because the word *brightest* applies differently to a girl and to a class. A magazine article not long ago undertook to prove that the House of Lords very fairly "*represents*" the British people because the lords as country landholders are such *representative* (typical) Britishers. What representative Britishers like must be what most Britishers like—so there you have *repre-*

sentative government! The happy lords, one felt, could each say to himself—

I like to do right;
I do what I like;
What I do must be right.

GET THE HABIT OF DEFINING

Through an ambiguity of words, then, the progress of a discussion is apt at any point to be stalled by a misunderstanding. The one remedy for the situation is to translate the misleading word or phrase into an accurate definition. In fact, the student can find no better "setting-up-exercise" to qualify himself for discussion than the practice of forming precise definitions. It is of course better to anticipate the misunderstanding with a precise statement of what one means, than to appeal dogmatically to rules as things that must mean the same to everybody concerned.

The misleadings of words, one should realize, are part of the inevitable risks of reasoning, and a misunderstanding is therefore not to be laid at once to the perversity of one's opponent. Unreflective speakers seem to assume that all things we think about have been pigeon-holed once for all as belonging to this or that *kind*, that our ancestors kindly named them for us—like Adam in the Garden of Eden,¹ and that

¹ See Alfred Sidgwick: *The Application of Logic*, pp. 34, 35.

when a man appears to differ with us in his understanding of names, it must be because he is quibbling. Such speakers proceed to make matters only worse by offering loose definitions that are just as ambiguous as the names they define. "Isn't an anarchist," they will say, "one who *talks against government?*" So he is, but when it is a question of deporting him, we cannot simply pigeon-hole him as a "talker against," if there may be some opinions against government which we should not think it criminal to express.

All our salted-down knowledge of the world we use in discussion in the form of stated or assumed general rules, and we make our discussion honest as well as skillful if in applying them we display a constant readiness to go behind the words to the meanings really intended.¹

The logic of the matter may be summed up as follows:—

(1) Every application of a general rule to a particular case involves a "middle term (M)."

(2) This term is apt to show (in the whole range of its use) some variation in its meaning.

(3) Unless we define this term for the meaning we intend, we may reason with a faulty syllogism in which "S is not M *in the sense of M that is P.*"

¹ The student will find helpful definitions of industrial terms in *Labor Terminology* (Bulletin No. 25 of the Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University).

SUGGESTED EXERCISE

Note down two or three terms which you hear used misleadingly. On each of them write a comment that will help in defining it and bring this to read before the class. For example:—

Profiteer. If a producer, who has the advantage of superior facilities, resources, or ability, charges for his product precisely the same price as other producers have to charge in order to be able to go on with their business, his profits are of course very much greater than the average. Does this make him a “profiteer”?

Democratic. College people say that our town library is all run down because it has been stocking up with popular books instead of scholarly books, which have few readers. The librarian says the public library must be a democratic institution. Is it more democratic to make passable reading abundant for *everybody* than to make excellent reading possible for *anybody*?

Cut out from daily or weekly papers any passages that help to define terms. For example:—

Liberal—radical. The liberal believes that the State is essentially social and is all for improving it by political methods so that it may function according to what he believes to be its original intention. Hence, he is interested in politics, takes

them seriously, goes at them hopefully, and believes in them as an instrument of social welfare and progress. He is politically-minded, with an interest in reform, putting good men in office, independent administrations, and quite frequently in third-party movements. The radical, on the other hand, believes that the State is fundamentally anti-social and is all for improving it off the face of the earth; not by blowing up officeholders, but by the historical process of strengthening, consolidating and enlightening economic organization.

On the side of economics, the liberal appears to recognize but two factors in the production of wealth, namely, labor and capital; and he occupies himself incessantly with all kinds of devices to adjust relations between them. The radical recognizes a third factor, namely, natural resources; and is absolutely convinced that as long as monopoly-interest in natural resources continues, no adjustment of the relations between labor and capital can possibly be made.

—*The Freeman*.

Sovereignty. The distinction between legal and moral right is so clear that there would seem to be no excuse for ignoring it. Equally clear is the difference between ascribing to a sovereign state a supreme and unlimited legal competence and asserting that it has either the moral right or the

actual power to do what it will. Moral right, legal competence, and physical power have no necessary relation to one another. Legal competence may be, and often is, exercised in defiance of moral right. Power may be possessed and employed without regard to law or justice. Moral right may be present without power to give effect to the acts or ends which it dictates; and legal competence may exist although actual powers of coercion be absent.

Recognition of a state's sovereignty does not settle what commands the state shall issue or with what power it shall enforce them. Yet we find it asserted that it is the baneful idea of sovereignty which stands in the way of an effective League of Nations and which furnishes support for national selfishness and arrogance.

—*The Weekly Review.*

CHAPTER VIII

HOW TO EXPRESS ONESELF TELLINGLY

The progress of a discussion will manifestly be speeded if the speakers can so word their views as to keep everybody thinking and feeling only what *must* be thought and felt in threshing the matter out. To get a consensus is hard enough at best, but it is commonly made still harder by bungling talk that starts thought on wrong scents, and stirs unprofitable feeling. The speaker, therefore, must look to his speech-habits if he is to gain power as a contributor to discussion.

His performance, as compared with a writer's, has two special difficulties: he cannot stop to meditate his wording; and he often feels a conflict in his expressive impulses between wording for clearness and wording for force. It takes some command of the resources of grammar and diction to express oneself precisely without getting cluttered up in phrase and clause qualifiers. Command of language comes best as a by-product of the habit of noting distinctions, and this must grow out of a sustained interest in ideas; but one can better one's speaking from the outset by keeping in mind a few special points in the

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expression of argument. These have (in part) been mentioned but they are brought together and emphasized as five maxims for practice:—

I. RID YOUR CONTENTION OF VAGUENESS

Do this even at the cost of wordiness. Your first statement of a contention may properly be forceful rather than clear, since your first need is to get attention to it. But having won attention, translate at once your forceful epigram into something explicit: we can't dispute it until we are sure what it means.

For example, in discussing the "servant question" you may begin—

"Domestic service is too undemocratic for the American working-girl."

This puts your view vigorously as a challenge. But as it stands it will put some of your hearers on the wrong scent. They will wonder whether you hold domestic service to be something *inevitably* undemocratic, or merely undemocratic in certain of its conventions that might be discarded. And your language may leave in some minds the unpleasant impression that you would deny the name of American to foreign-born working-girls now "living out" in American homes. Make your contention, therefore, more explicit:

"American-bred girls feel something of a social stigma in present-day domestic service."

Another example of vague contention is from a discussion on America's neutrality in 1916:—

"America should not be exporting munitions, since war is wrong."

Left in this form, the statement set its hearers to disputing over "*America's*" export of munitions without keeping clear what difference it made to American neutrality, whether the exporting was done by private American industries or by the American government. And the offered reason that "*war is wrong*" proved even more befuddling. It blurred the difference between a bad state of civilization for which no one in particular is to blame, and bad actions for which specific statesmen are to blame. As a result the speaker seemed to be arguing that it was the duty of the millennium to be here; and that we should proceed to eschew practices which the millennium—did it but show up—would make unnecessary. What he meant to contend was this:—

"Our government should hold America's munitioning power in reserve as a threat with which to compel the belligerents to settle their quarrels by more civilized processes than war."

II. EXPRESS OPINION AS OPINION, AND FACT AS FACT

Various expressions—such as "perhaps," "doubtless," "it would seem," "I believe," etc.—suggest *degrees* of downrightness and intimate to your hearers where in your presentation you expect the risks

of uncertainty to lie. Anyone who has heard two small boys argue realizes that the kiddishness of their performance lies in the lack of any such awareness of risk in their statements. Each talks in a sustained fortissimo of cocksureness, dogmatizing like a pope where he knows, and barking to keep his courage up where he doesn't know. Maturity of speech, therefore, appears first of all in the power to qualify and tone down one's assertions. One who knows enough of the world to realize the complexity of most social, industrial, and educational matters knows that the facts are at best imperfectly accessible and that some mistakes of credulity and false inference are inevitable. Such a disputant is listened to with respect because his language invites attention to points of honest doubt and keeps the discussion going in a spirit of joint inquiry.

Especially should you avoid using the word "fact" where certainty cannot be claimed. If you say, for example—

"The fact that crime is to be laid to society rather than to the criminal makes capital punishment do the latter an injustice"

your sentence claims to base an inference on a fact; but any dispute of your view will attach not to the *relation* between capital punishment and society's responsibility but to the *truth* of your opinion about society's responsibility. What you have expressed as a "fact" some hearers will deny, asking if it is the

duty of "Society" (personified as everybody's rich uncle) to keep us all so contented that nobody shall have motives to commit crime?

III. BEWARE OF COMPOUND CONTENTIONS

Since we can dispute only one point at a time, a contention that contains two disputable points seems trying to slip one of them by while engaging our attention with the other. This your hearers will be quick to resent. If you say,—

"Japanese working men are not 'coolies,' and our exclusion of them is prompted by mere prejudice" you are thus offering two disputable points. We cannot do justice to the question of race prejudice if we let the question of coolie labor escape notice by getting it tied into the same sentence. Japanese will have a clearer case on race prejudice when Japan has brought her labor conditions (hours, wages, right to collective bargaining, etc.) up to western standards, so that "coolie" cannot mean "exploited cheap laborer."

IV. CONTEND FOR NO MORE THAN YOU CAN PROVE

A sweeping claim only half justified by your evidence leaves a weaker impression than a temperate claim fully backed up. An editorial against Theodore Roosevelt in 1912 began—

Mr. Roosevelt's attack on big business is insincere. As evidence it cited his acceptance of political sup-

port from the corporations, his personal intimacy with several financiers, and various early campaign speeches in which he had favored the promotion of large enterprises. Granting, however, that all these made inconsistencies in his position, they fall short of proving insincerity. A many-sided man of warm partisanship and impulsive utterance might well show conflicting sympathies without any real lapse of honesty. His critic would have made an actually more damaging point, had he contended—

Mr. Roosevelt's sincerity in attacking big business is open to suspicion.

It is a common form of over-contention to claim a "contrary" where one need claim only a "contradictory." If when arguing against the protective tariff you come to deal with the claim that protection makes for wage-increases, you might contend either—

- (1) Protection makes for actual decrease in wages;
- (2) Protection does not make for wage-increases.

Of these two contentions the first states the *contrary* claim, the second the *contradictory*. The first seems stronger, because it claims more; but since it would be much *harder to prove* than the second contention, the latter is actually the stronger for your case. The positive arguments for free trade are so strong that this negative one need do no more than cancel the opposing claim. Not only is it bad mental economy to shoulder a heavier burden of proof than

your whole case calls for: tall talk feebly propped by the facts hurts your standing for mental honesty.

V. TRANSLATE ABSTRACT IDEAS INTO CONCRETE IMAGERY

Discussion on social and business issues is bound to deal in ideas of *relation*—such ideas as “controversy,” “alternative,” “freedom of contract,” “individual responsibility.” Such ideas make no pictures in the mind, and hence are hard to keep one’s attention on. A skillful speaker, therefore, does not proceed far in expressing them without giving his hearer some vivid concrete equivalents to grasp them by. In the following passage, for example, Miss Follett uses the analogies of water-drops, sands, piano-keys to make vivid the rather abstruse thought that a man’s influence in the community is greater than he is apt to infer from his numerical insignificance.

The idea of the state as a collection of units has fatally misled us in regard to our duty as citizens. A man thinks of his share in the collective responsibility as $1/500,000$ part of the whole responsibility. This is too small a part to interest him, and therefore he often disregards such an infinitesimal duty altogether. Of course we tell him about “little drops of water, little grains of sand,” etc., but hitherto our eloquence has had but little effect. This is because it is untrue. We must somehow make it clear that the part of every man in a great city is not analogous

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to the grain of sand in the desert: it is not a 1/500,000 part of the whole duty. It is a part so bound up with every other part that no fraction of a whole can represent it. It is like the key of a piano, the value of which lies not in its being 1/86 of all the notes, but in its relations to all the other notes. If that note is lacking every other note loses something of its value.¹

VI. GET WORDS TO TOUCH OFF RIGHT ACTION-TENDENCIES IN YOUR HEARERS

It has already been noted (p. 50) that many ideas are connected with deep-rooted sentiments and dispose the mind at once to an active acceptance or repulsion. They do this quite without regard to the logic with which they may be advanced. Their associations with a man's dominant desires are alone enough to charge them with action-tendencies, and they need only be mentioned for these to be aroused. It therefore makes all the difference to the persuasive value of your words whether they call up action-tendencies in the hearer's mind *that enhance or that inhibit* its response to your plea. One might almost say that persuasion takes place through a sort of *psychological syllogism*, of which the major premise reminds the hearer of one of his active desires, and the minor premise puts the speaker's contention as something that chimes in with it.

For example, a speaker among a group of trade-

¹ M. P. Follett, *The New State* (Longmans), p. 336.

unionists recently had to express the unpopular view that labor's right to strike has its limits. He said,—

The policemen's strike puts it up to union labor to define exactly what it is claiming when it claims the right to strike. When hatters strike, labor can say to the public, "Do without your new hats until hatters get their due." But when milkmen strike, labor cannot say to the public, "Do without fed babies until milkmen get their due." When policemen strike, labor cannot say, "Do without public safety until policemen get their due."

What labor does say in this case is that it is the employer who has injured the public by not giving in to labor's claim of its due. But this is to deny the employer any right to contest on the question *what is labor's due*. Labor, having here a choice between political action, which does not injure the public, and direct action, which does injure the public, must take blame for the injury when its choice is for a contest by direct action. The right to strike stops short of holding the public to ransom for the immediate delivery of labor's self-adjudged due.

The speaker's problem here was to win his hearers' attention to an argument that went against their special interests. Its handicap lay in the fact that they were apt not to keep their minds on the thought-sequence that it called for. Convinced as they were that the police were right on the question of unionizing, their thought tended to fly back to dwell upon

that part of the controversy in which their desires as trade-unionists had sure ground. Had the speaker begun on the question of striking by referring to injured property, his hearers would have flared up by the sheer habit of asserting workers' rights against property rights. But at the point of disagreement with them he began by referring to hungry babies. His hearers—many of them men with families—had to pause sympathetically on that possibility. The result was that his clinching idea—"holding the public to ransom"—came to them as men of the whole community with homes to safeguard.

Wording that evokes a desired reaction may of course be used with falsifying effects. A speaker must expect, therefore, to have to make people face the truth where they are deceiving themselves with palliative names.

"The part of the persuader in helping or compelling others to accept or stick to the right conception, labelled with the right name, is plain enough. He should not permit his hearers to call rudeness or destructiveness *fun*, stinginess *caring for one's own household*, indolence *weariness*, snobbishness *refinement*, lies *excuses*, bigotry *religion*; or to suffer from the two delusions which an Oxford don says his little world suffers: having no convictions and calling it *balanced mind*, and expressing nothing definite and calling it *moderation*.¹

¹ J. A. Winans, *Public Speaking*, p. 268.

Especially must one guard against opponents who seek to discredit one's case by putting it into language that stirs aversion or ridicule. If the case of striking police rests on the view that their public employer has dealt autocratically in forbidding them the union affiliations accorded to other employees, their action is not fairly to be described in such terms as *mutiny*, *desertion*, etc. These words beg the very question at issue, namely the question whether their status is that of employees or that of soldiers.

Even when words are not thus prejudicing, the *connection* in which a thing is said may have the same effect. A member of the House Committee on Interstate Commerce, after reciting to Mr. Glenn Plumb a passage from his plan for nationalizing the railways, read aloud from a document which declared that mines and waterways should be national property, and then asked Mr. Plumb if he agreed. Getting "Yes" for his answer, he triumphantly announced: "That document is the Russian Soviet Constitution!" His purpose, of course, was to stigmatize the Plumb Plan as something "Bolshevistic." This congressman, who is a loud advocate of a national budget, might have realized the worthlessness of his tactics, had he read on a little further in the Soviet Constitution. In Part V, chap. xvi, ¶ 80 he would have found that Bolshevik Russia has a national budget!

As a student of discussion you have now covered

HOW TO EXPRESS ONESELF TELLINGLY 121

the essential points in which one must be qualified to contribute one's part.

You have made a good start towards establishing a good speaking form.

You have got in mind the logical essentials of good debate.

You have learned how to make the expression of your thought count effectively.

But your part in the meeting is not merely to make your own speech and then sit by as a spectator. Your further part is to take a hand in making the whole discussion progress to a profitable end. This will be your study in the chapters that follow.

SUGGESTED EXERCISE

According to your conviction compose a tactfully worded speech either defending the union practice in one of the instances below (quoted from the *Boston Herald*), or urging its abandonment.

1. On a ten-story apartment house in this city the elevator men under a separate contract were putting in the steel framework within which the car was to run. To construct the "well" steel beams had to be placed about the opening on each floor and their ends sunk into the brick work. Each beam was about a foot in height. The elevator workmen cut into the brick and cemented in the beams from the first floor to the eighth. Then the bricklayers protested. The elevator men were doing brick-masons' work. The

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union could not tolerate that infraction of their rules. The work might be almost complete and it might be all O. K., but it ought to have been done by bricklayers and would have to be done by bricklayers. And, faced with the alternative of an entire cessation of work of every kind on that apartment, the man who paid the bills had to stand on the side lines while the brick men cut out all those steel beams and cemented them in all over again.

2. Article 12 of the rules of Local Union 12 of the United Association of Plumbers reads thus: "All piping appertaining to plumbing shall be done and cut by members of the United Association by hand power on the job." Now there are two ways to cut and thread ordinary pipe for a building in course of construction. The first is fast, efficient, economical. The second is slow, deficient, expensive. The quicker and cheaper way would be to send a young engineer or master plumber from shop or office to make a rough outline sketch of the job to be done. From his sketch with the simple directions alone necessary, all the pipe could be cut and threaded by power machinery and taken to the job ready for placing. But under the union rule this work must be done "by hand power" and "on the job." The union men must measure and cut by hand; by hand they must twist the long-handled die stock for threading the pipe. What could be done in the shop in twenty seconds takes five minutes on the job.

**SECTION II : MAKING THE DISCUS-
SION GROUP CO-OPERATE**

SECTION II: MAKING THE DISCUSSION GROUP CO-OPERATE

CHAPTER IX

HOW TO SECURE THOUGHT-ORGANIZATION IN COMMITTEE

Anyone who expects to share in the decisions of a responsible discussion group must realize that his own responsibility does not stop with making his personal contribution an effective one. He is responsible for helping his fellow-members maintain a co-operative and constructive procedure in their meetings. A scattering of star speeches from individuals who are "on their job" will not bring sound decisions, if the members as a body are animated by no sense of their collective job in group-thinking and group-will. It is of course too much to expect that a trade-union meeting—or, for that matter, a college faculty meeting—shall display the qualifications of a trained discussion-group, so long as the special discipline that this book stands for has no recognized place in popular schooling, but students of discussion can do much towards making their co-operative ideal contagious in the meetings that they attend.

The place in which to establish their ideal first is the committee-meeting. The committee is the discussion-group in embryo. It is small enough to need no formal restrictions upon the speaking; its members are not embarrassed by stage-fright; and its face-to-face line-up invites a spirit of "get-together."

WHAT THE COMMITTEE AIMS TO DO

Just what, in theory, is the committee's "job"? Any one of the various committees of a state legislature will illustrate. The legislature has to discuss and decide a large variety and number of issues in the course of its session. Practically its members cannot get time to organize, each for himself, the facts and bearings of each issue as it comes up. Yet each member is responsible for giving a final vote upon it that represents his considered judgment upon those facts and bearings. The committee is the legislature's solution of this dilemma. It is a small subgroup of the legislature deputed to look into the antecedents, particulars, bearings, and merits of every question within a certain class of questions. Its members become, as compared with the rest of the body, specialists in the matters intrusted to their study. They act in its stead in the preliminary examining and shaping of a measure; they report their information in a form quickly available for the rest; and in the ensuing debate they can be counted on to give prompt additions and corrections to the

fact-basis of the speeches. The committee thus serves the whole body as a small and efficient unit of thought-organization. But it serves also as a unit of will-organization. Its report on a measure offers not only information but a resolution as to what should be done. And since by custom its members include men of both political parties, their resolution can be presumed to represent an effort to harmonize the rival interests at stake.

Such, in ideal, is the function of a committee—not only of a legislature but of any deliberative group responsible for action. Why then, in actual practice, do we hear so much complaint of the way committees work?

In the case of legislative committees the reason is partly "over-legislation"—our bad public habit of multiplying bills to please small local or factional interests—and partly out-of-date organization of the whole committee system. The result was recently illustrated in a statement by the Civic League of Cleveland about the Ohio General Assembly. Its members serve on an average of nine committees each. Thirty-eight committees have almost nothing to do, while a few are swamped with work. Bills covering a wide range of subjects are sent to a committee quite regardless of its title, being maneuvered there for tactical and political reasons. Specialization by its members therefore becomes impossible, and so distasteful becomes their work that committees get

never a full attendance and often not a majority. No wonder people feel little respect for the committee as a political organ!

In other deliberative groups the ill-success of committees is to be laid chiefly to the lack among their members of any real sense of the committee-function. Mr. Graham Wallas, speaking of his experience on committees, remarks:

"I am sure that at least half of the men and women with whom I have sat were unaware that any conscious mental effort on their part was called for. They attended in almost the same mental attitude in which some of them went to church—with a vague sense, that is to say, that they were doing their duty and that good must come of it. If they became interested in the business, it was an accident. Of the remaining half, perhaps two-thirds had come with one or two points which they wanted to 'get through,' and meanwhile let the rest of the business drift past them, unless some phrase in the discussion roused them to a more or less irrelevant interruption."¹

All this means that most people have yet to learn the ABC of responsible concerted thinking. Students of discussion, therefore, should treat a committee-meeting as a class for self-cultivation in this kind of group-effort. Its smallness and informality permit its members to speak up at any point without

¹ The Great Society, Ch. XI. "The Organization of Thought," p. 276.

discourtesy if its procedure seems going amiss. One can at the same time help the chairman keep up his rôle in conducting the meeting and maintain one's own point of view in contributing to it. The committee thus becomes a little laboratory of discussion technique.

HOW THE COMMITTEE SHOULD BE COMPOSED

Not all committees, of course, have the function here considered,—that of organizing a working program for thought and action by which the larger discussion group can dispose of an issue at once with adequacy and despatch. Some committees have a mainly practical function. They are deputed to draft a resolution, a bill, a memorial, or to transact a piece of business. Such committees involve so little concern with factional views that their make-up occasions no special claims.

The committees here considered, however, involve for their members a *representative* rôle, and should be made up accordingly. This function is not properly served by the practice—unfortunately common in labor unions—of vesting the appointment of all committees in the presiding officer of the meeting.¹

¹ This practice has been defended on the ground that the committee-appointing power adds prestige to the chairmanship, and that an organization will rouse itself to secure a better chairman when the office carries large powers. The chairman, however, has considerable powers in any case (see p. 131), and when he monopolizes the choosing of committees, he tends to become an agent for keeping a faction in control of the prestige-conferring activities of his organization.

He may be quite impartial in his intentions; but he cannot be aware of every difference of interest in the questions that call for committee action, nor can he tell off-hand which person will be an acceptable committee spokesman for each interest involved. Some questions have not had enough attention to develop in the meeting any manifest alignments of interest. It is better, therefore, to keep the whole discussion-group responsible for divining where the cleavages lie both in the question and among the persons considering it, and for nominating representatives to thresh it out in committee.

The sounder theory here is that the forming of committees is a function vested in the whole body. The latter may, indeed, and very frequently will, delegate this function to its chairman. When the committee's work is to be the carrying out of some piece of business, its make-up is not of enough consequence to deserve an expenditure of discussion time in nominating and voting. The simple procedure in such a case is for some one to move "that the chairman appoint a committee of three (or any desired number) to"—do thus and so. But even if this procedure is followed seven times out of ten (and it is a sensible economy of time to do so), the practice should not be allowed to efface the presumption in favor of nominations from the floor. Three times out of ten the

electing of committee members by the whole body may be highly desirable. If the appointing of committees has become a prerogative of the chairman, no one can move that a committee be elected, without seeming to cast doubt on the chairman's fairness or good judgment. A freer action in this matter therefore follows when the body keeps the prerogative of deciding the committee personnel vested not in an official but in itself.

Whether appointed or elected, a committee that is to deal with any subject of contention should have in its make-up *a representative for each factional point of view*. Any faction in the main body will be disposed to accept the committee's report as a basis of joint action if that report has already won the assent of its own spokesman.

HOW THE COMMITTEE SHOULD PROCEED

When the committee sits down to its work, what part does each member play?

Let us begin with the chairman's part.¹

The chairman stands to the other committee-members in much the relation of a musical conductor to other musicians playing in concert. The conduc-

¹ For the various ways of choosing the chairman see F. M. Gregg: *Parliamentary Law* (Ginn & Co.), p. 46.

tor does not "boss" the violinist, 'cellist, clarinetist; he does not assign them their parts:—the composition to be played determines that. But he keeps the total effect at all times in view. He guides the pace, the rhythm, the gradations of loud and soft, and maintains the parts in due balance. The chairman likewise is not to dominate his colleagues and run the meeting to suit himself. He should, indeed, present them—in the written notice of the meeting—with a "docket" or list of items to be discussed. But he does this simply in order to afford them time to take thought and advice beforehand, and he should invite them, once they get together, to make any change of program that they prefer. In the committee debate he speaks on equal terms with the others. He leads it only as one specially charged to preserve the common aim:—that of reaching a consensus by due attention to each partisan and to each alternative.

The student, however, is likely to begin as a plain committee-man. How shall he play this part?

Suppose you are one of a committee of five appointed from several unions of the building trades in your town to consider the project of a Credit Union,—that is, of a co-operative banking enterprise to be maintained by the workers in those trades. The speech in your union that led to its taking up the matter will have left in your mind at least the following items of information:

1. Every worker in the affiliated trades may become a member by buying one or more shares of stock at \$10.00 each—payable in installments.
2. In electing officers and ratifying policies each member has one vote.
3. The directors and the credit and supervisory committees are all elected and serve without pay.
4. Members may put in money on deposit as in a savings bank and thus draw both dividends on their shares and interest on their deposits.
5. Members may borrow money, usually upon the credit of their personal character.
6. Credit Union Banks on this plan have already had an impressive record of success in Europe and America.

This much of information you share with everybody in your interested group. As a committeeman you now want to find what you can contribute to the subject. How shall you go about it?

When, in chapter II, you were considering how your mind should attack a matter under discussion, you found that two questions could be counted on to cut the issue open. They were the questions (1) What is it? and (2) What of it?

Now that you are examining what your mind can bring to bear upon the committee's work, you will find that two similar questions lay open your special qualifications. They are—

(1) What do I know?

(2) What do I care?

The first question will draw your attention to passages in your experience that involved matters at least similar to those now involved. You have collected dues in your union; you have helped administer accident benefits; you once belonged to a neighborhood enterprise in co-operative buying; your relatives once suffered from dealings with loan sharks, etc. Experience like this will not be duplicated by other members of your committee. It means that you either know, or at least have access to, facts, testimony, precedents, that your fellow committeemen cannot so readily command. It was probably a recognition of this special experience of yours that suggested your inclusion in the committee personnel.

The second question—What do I care?—will draw attention to your special sensitiveness for certain *values* involved. You have a rather developed sense of the injustice involved in the ordinary provisions for banking credit:—in the fact, that is, that whereas a business man on the credit of his personal character can get a substantial loan, a working man of equal personal integrity can get no such welcome for his small borrowings. Or you feel rather strongly that trade unionists need education in the processes of finance. If you know yourself, you will realize that your talking in the past has tended to stress,

or at least to imply certain *principles* that your fellow-workers made less of. It was doubtless this "championing," as well as your special knowledge, that made you desired as a committee-member.

By putting these two questions you have drawn into the light your own equipment for the committee's work. Proceed at once to improve that equipment. This you can do in two respects: you can make your special knowledge more exact and available, and you can more carefully think out your principles. Look up the data that lie near to your hand, printed reports, newspaper clippings, etc. Interview the informants to whom you have special access, and make written notes of what they say. Talk over your ideas of policy with one or two friends. In this way you will come to the committee meeting prepared to make yourself count from the start.

When the meeting is under way, the part you take is of course conditioned by the moves of your fellow committeemen. Two maxims, however, can help you to play a steady rôle throughout. They are:—

(1) *Take responsibility for one point of view.*

Remember that the points of view that deserve a hearing are those held by *factions*, not by individuals. Your personal likes and dislikes, therefore, must not intrude into the debate. You sit as a *representative* of one of the interests at stake, not as a lucky "insider" getting consideration for your private desires.

If your committee, for example, is getting up a recommendation as to a proposed Credit Union, its parleys will not go far without calling out three distinct interests: namely—

The safety of the worker's stock and deposits. Will trade-unionist directors and credit committee be trustworthy as business men with their fellow-workers' savings?

The worker's need of emergency loans. Will the Credit Union convert good personal character into a real business asset?

The enlarging of the labor movement's scope. Will co-operative banking prove a new source of power in the strategy of collective bargaining?

Each of these interests needs to be set fully out for what it is worth. There are uncertainties, difficulties, fears, objections to be reckoned with, and it is a real danger that the committee—treating what is everybody's business as nobody's business—will let its talk play over the obvious points of all three phases without coming to close quarters with any one. Make yourself spokesman for one, therefore, and try to make your colleagues speak up for others.

(2) *Translate antagonism into "misunderstanding."*

Many people carry into the committee meeting pugnacious habits that they have acquired in public debate. The full session of a labor union tends to pro-

ceed as a "will organization" rather than as a "thought organization." Its speakers are concerned not so much with thinking measures out as with getting them adopted, and the need of impressing hearers in large numbers stimulates them into expressing opposition with an emphasis that runs to combativeness. Now combativeness begets combativeness. Beyond a certain point the fervor with which you are opposed suggests that something is wrong with your mental processes or moral standards. Naturally you resent this and reply in kind. Unfortunate as this is in a large meeting, in a committee it is worse, for the committee's function is, precisely, to avert a premature clash of will. Do your part, therefore, to keep the committee talking in a mood of *explanation*. If an argument is put harshly, assume that the speaker will soften it if he gets a more accurate statement of the view he is opposing. Since we all experience the constant difficulty of making words convey our views without incidental wrong implications, no one will take offense at your assumption that he has slightly misunderstood the statement he combats. Indeed he will feel that you are crediting him with a readiness to meet on an intellectual plane instead of a sparring platform.

WHAT THE COMMITTEE REPORT SHOULD SHOW

Since the committee is a small sub-group deputed by a large discussion-group to specialize upon a pro-

posed measure, it must shape its information and advice into a form helpful to the action of the larger group. Its "thought-organizing" must get formulated into a report.

In order really to help the larger meeting dispose of the matter both adequately and expeditely the report should set out plainly the three steps achieved in the committee's own thinking about it: namely—

1. The fact basis of the matter
2. The interests at stake
3. The recommendation

The facts on the basis of which the meeting is to make up its mind should be presented in a way to be quickly grasped and then retained in mind by a roomful of people. This is not easily done, but a committee can make its report do it by using two kinds of fact-summary: the typical case and the statistical chart.

The facts about credit unions—their membership, their deposits, loans, rates of dividend, etc.—if merely enumerated, would make an impression of something vastly detailed. Give the totals, therefore, on these items: they indicate how many people are banking in credit unions and how much money is already committed. But instead of describing a dozen credit unions with a dozen variations of detail, select

a typical case and emphasize the facts about that. For example,—

The Cigar Factory Employees Credit Union (of Boston) during the year 1920 with a membership of 800 loaned \$35,000 to its members, did a business of nearly \$50,000, and paid an 8 per cent dividend.

One such case illustrates the successful working of any well organized and conducted credit union. For the purposes of discussion, therefore, you should tell the essentials about the organization and conduct of this example. It will fix the meeting's attention on the specific processes, liabilities, and advantages in question.

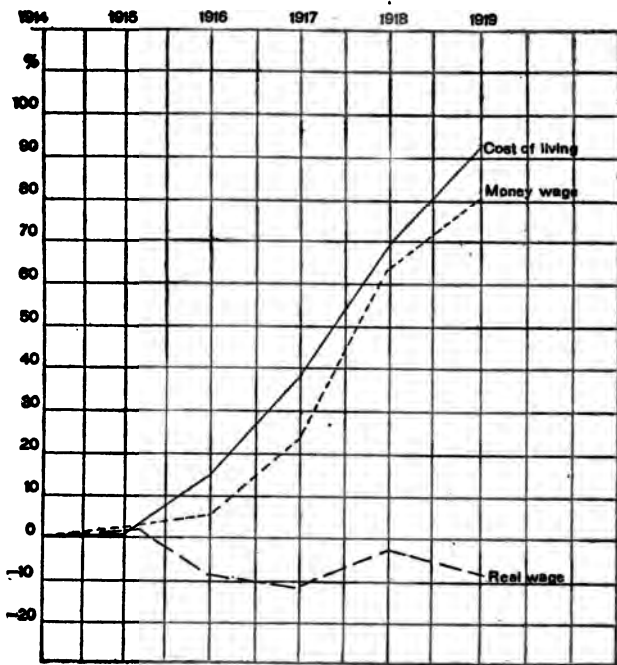
The Use of Diagrams and Charts.

A further resource for fact-display is the diagram or statistical chart. Percentages and other figures fade from the mind unless they are charted for the eye. The make-up of an organization, too, with its officials, committees, scheme of representation, etc., becomes confusing when described in the clauses of a constitution, and should be set before the meeting in a diagram that displays all its parts in their relations at one view. Four kinds of chart are serviceable:—

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(1) *The curve chart.*

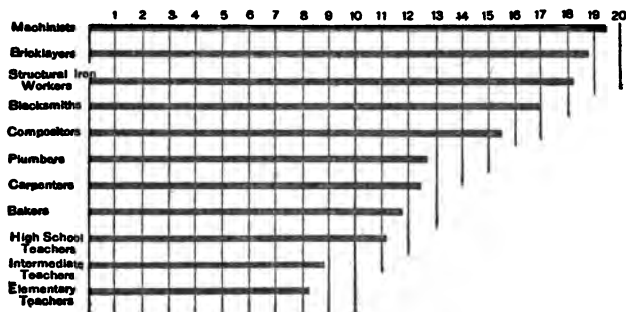
Example: The changes in money wages and real wages of railway employees between December, 1914, and December, 1919.¹



¹This chart was prepared by the Bureau of Applied Economics, Washington, for Alexander M. Bing's *War-time Strikes and Their Adjustment* (Dutton, 1921).

(2) *The bar chart.*

Example: Comparison of teachers' salaries in five middle western states with the union scale of wages for certain crafts in the same section.¹



¹ From the *Bulletin of the National Education Association* of December, 1919.

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(3) *The segmented circle.*

Example: How each dollar in the United States Government's outlay for 1921 was spent.¹

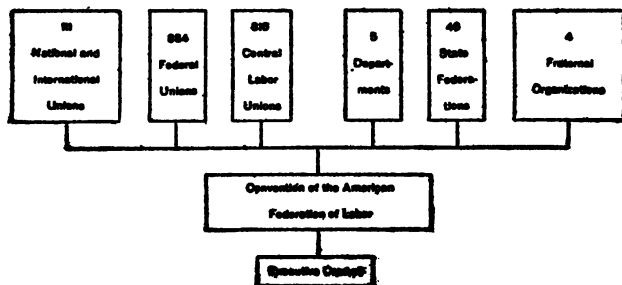


Debts on past wars (68%)	\$2,838,118,400
Preparation for future wars (20%)	855,956,963
Uses of civilized life (12%)	481,744,726
Total appropriation.....	\$4,175,820,089

¹ From *The Searchlight*, October, 1921.

(4) *The organization diagram.*

Example: The plan of representation embodied in the American Federation of Labor.¹



¹From the Bulletin of the *Industrial Information Service* for March 18, 1920.

Charts of this kind are easily drawn on a large scale and can be posted in view of the whole meeting when the committee report is read. One of the committee should explain the chart in a short speech which draws attention to the significant features.

The second step in the committee report is to mention exactly what interests are at stake. Each interest should be stated in language that its own partisans would accept as fair. The committee's purpose here is to show that it has examined the merits of conflicting claims, and is not trying to ignore or minimize any claim that may seem to have counted for little in its recommendation. Since competing interests give rise to *alternative* proposals, the chairman can make this passage suggest, by its considerate tone, that the committee's proposal which follows is a harmonizing one.

In noting what "interests" must be reckoned with the committee must take account of every claim or prejudice that enters into the question as a practical one for its group. An "interest" may seem petty, selfish, or otherwise unworthy, but if it will actually play a part in the situation, it must not be slighted merely because it ought not to be there. Even selfishness or jealousy represent claims that have *some* warrant, and with a little tact can be given their due.

The third step in the report is the statement of the agreed recommendation. Here the committee should

think of its study and discussion as crystallizing into a plan of action clearly "motivated" by the facts and interests it has set into view. Having organized its thought, the committee must now organize its will.

What is sought is co-operative action. To formulate by joint thinking a recommendation that really invites this is not easy. Such a recommendation is the expression in practical terms of the group "consensus." It must offer definite means to the agreed ends. Its plan of action, therefore, must include some provision for bringing into play motives that will sustain the desired co-operation. This involves touching upon specific prejudices, and fastening specific responsibilities. Committees tend unconsciously to shirk the difficulty of framing real action-schemes by making their recommendations general. Where the desired ends in view make demands upon loyalty, faith, thrift, willingness to put up with inconveniences, or to take a bit of extra bother, they will merely express a pious resolution on behalf of the requisite graces or a vague reproach upon people who lack them. The student should realize that such expressions are futile. Your job as a committee is, in part, to suggest methods or arrangements that make duty easier. If the working of your recommended credit-union scheme will have to reckon with thriftlessness and suspicion, tell your parent body something definite that can be done about it. The art of getting concerted action is the art of maneuvering

influences to reinforce the more socialized impulses in men.

As a committee-man you have played the rôle of co-operative thinker and speaker on a small stage. In the next chapter you will study how to carry out that rôle on the larger stage of a full deliberative meeting.

SUGGESTED EXERCISE

Choose five members of the class to sit in front and act as a committee upon some measure proposed for discussion. The rest of the class should take notes on their talk, using sheets ruled as follows:—

NAME	POINT OF VIEW	CONTRIBUTION	CRITICISM

When the committee seems to have come to an understanding, the class should offer criticisms upon its work. Observe especially—

- (1) Where a member represented no distinct point of view towards the matter.
- (2) Where a member seemed to express a merely personal view rather than that of a group.

- (3) Whether the speakers stuck to each point until they had disposed of it.
- (4) Whether they took account of possible alternatives.

CHAPTER X

HOW TO USE PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

When you find yourself taking a seat in a roomful of people about to go into action as a deliberative group, you feel something creative in the occasion. It is in your group-relations that social ideas, standards, policies become part of your life, and when a group deliberates, these things are in the making. Some of our most potentially vital ideas depend for their power to take practical form on our finding them sustained by the faith of others in our group; as ideas they become "realized," as we say, when they can be counted on to motivate the conduct of our daily companions in social, political, and industrial relations. Social realities, therefore, are created out of the mere dream-stuff of ideas by minds that act in concert.

If you could look into the minds of your neighbors at public meetings, you would get a feeling that society is divided by ideas into "struggle-groups," often very imperfectly conscious of themselves, but each striving to establish its ideas as controlling forces in organized life. Such invisible struggle-groups occur as sub-divisions within any deliberative body. It

is therefore a matter of practical social technique to secure for the body some orderly procedure in getting ideas mobilized, expressed, and accepted in full view of the alternatives. Without a concerted "will-to-order" the meeting deteriorates into a crowd, reacting to ideas not at the level of deliberation but at the infra-reasoning level of mob-contagion. The tradition of that deliberative will-to-order is what we have in the form of "Parliamentary Law."

Your influence in a meeting, therefore, counts for more if you are something of a "parliamentarian." This does not mean that you need to cram up on such manuals as *Robert's Rules of Order* or *Cushing's Manual of Parliamentary Practice*." Those works are very detailed, and once you have in mind the appropriate maneuvers in a debate you can put the books aside for reference in times of doubt. What you want now is not so much a head full of rules—some of them being merely the necessary evils of clumsy organization—as a compass to guide you among the rules. The first concern of a modern debater is to establish an attitude towards this old code that will keep it simply a set of tools for the meeting, not a dead hand on its working.

You can form the right attitude if you will fix your attention upon three guiding considerations:—

1. Rules of procedure aim to keep the meeting "crew-minded," not "crowd-minded."

2. They insure the registering of one decision at a time.
3. They aim to harmonize majority rule with minority rights.

In the sections that follow you will learn first how to remember the essentials of parliamentary order, and next how to co-operate with the chairman in making the three chief considerations of order prevail.

HOW TO REMEMBER PARLIAMENTARY ORDER

Over twenty kinds of parliamentary motion are described in the manuals of procedure. Not all of these are in common demand, and those which are can be kept in mind more easily by thinking of them as composing four types of motion. The four types are—

- (1) Principal motions
- (2) Subsidiary motions
- (3) Incidental motions
- (4) Privileged motions

The essential points to remember for the motions of each type can be briefly stated.

Principal motions are motions that bring matters for consideration before the meeting. They start the debate. A principal motion takes precedence of no other motion; that is, it may not interrupt the meeting's action upon a motion of any other type, whereas any such other motion may, while a principal one is under debate, be presented and must then be

acted on before the meeting returns to the principal question.

Two principal motions are important:—

1. A *main* motion is a motion that starts a new subject of consideration. Once started, its consideration cannot be interrupted by another main motion.
2. A motion *to rescind* is one that would annul some action which the body has taken at a previous session. An action taken at the present session can be brought again into question only by the motion “to reconsider” (see p. 153).

Subsidiary motions are motions applied to other motions to the end of modifying them or disposing of them appropriately. Subsidiary motions take precedence of principal motions, but they yield precedence to incidental and privileged motions.

Five subsidiary motions deserve attention:—

1. A motion *to amend* is one that would modify the purport of a motion under debate. An amendment may itself be amended but this “secondary” amendment may not be amended in turn. Amendments take four common forms:
 - (a) “I move to amend the question *by striking out*” (such and such words).
 - (b) “I move to amend *by inserting* [or *adding*] (such and such words).

(c) "I move to amend *by dividing* the question so as to make the following distinct propositions" . . .

(d) "I move to amend *by substituting* for the words [here state them] the following" . . . or—

"I move to amend the question by substituting for it the following" . . .

An amendment may be hostile but it must be "*germane*." For example, a motion "to extend to X a vote of thanks" may be amended by substituting "censure" for "thanks," but it cannot be amended to make it a motion "to order X to deposit fifty dollars in the treasury." When adopted, an amendment becomes part of the main motion, which then awaits the meeting's action "as amended."

2. A motion *to refer* the question to (such and such) *a committee* is one which would remove the question from the present body until it shall be reported upon.

3. A motion *to postpone* the question *until a certain time* would obviously defer the body's action upon it until that day.

4. A motion *for the previous question* is one that would suppress further debate on a question before the meeting. It is itself undebatable and unamendable, and it requires a two-thirds vote to pass.

5. A motion *to lay* the question *on the table* is

one which would postpone action upon it indefinitely.¹ It is undebatable and unamendable. The question that it postpones may be taken up again at the same, or at a later meeting by a motion *to take the question from the table*.

The ranking order among these subsidiary motions may be remembered with the help of a little diagram. Thus—

Main Motion	Undebat.	Unamend.	2/3 vote
1. Amend.			
2. Refer to Committee.			
3. Postpone to a certain time			
4. Previous question.	x	x	x
5. Lay on the table.	x	x	

The diagram shows number 1 (*to amend*) to have the lowest rank in point of precedence, and number 5 (*to lay on the table*) the highest rank. It means, for example, that a motion *to refer to committee* is “in order” while a motion *to amend* is pending, but not while the motion *to postpone to a certain time* is pending.

¹The so-called motion “to postpone indefinitely” is really a motion to suppress the question altogether. Its use in the case of most questions savors of sharp practice and should be discountenanced.

Incidental motions are motions that arise incidentally to the consideration of any of the preceding motions. They yield to privileged motions only. Except for the *appeal* (in most cases) they are undebatable.

Three incidental motions deserve special attention:—

1. A motion *for leave to withdraw* the question is one that would expedite action where the maker of the original motion has changed his mind about it. The original mover may simply “ask leave to withdraw (or modify)” his motion, and the chairman may then declare that unless objection is offered, the motion stands withdrawn (or modified as asked). If objection is made, any member may then move for leave to withdraw (or modify) the question. The motion is undebatable and may not itself be modified by a subsidiary motion.
2. An *appeal from the decision of the chair* is a motion to secure from the whole body a ruling on a “point of order” (usually a question of indecorum or irregularity in procedure). Any member has at any time (even while another “has the floor”) the right “to rise to a point of order,” and the chairman must then offer a ruling on his challenge. If any one objects to the de-

cision, he may then appeal to a vote upon it.

An appeal is debatable, except—

- (a) When it relates to a point of decorum,
- (b) When it relates to priority of business,
- (c) When it arises out of an undebatable question.

3. A motion *to reconsider* is one that would bring up, for modifying or annulling, an action taken during the current session. Only a member who voted on the *prevailing* side (whether affirmative or negative) of the question to be reconsidered is entitled to make this motion. If adopted, it places the original question before the meeting exactly where it stood just before voted upon.

Privileged motions are certain motions that deal with the needs and rights of the assembly. They take precedence of all other motions, except certain motions either arising out of, or applied to, themselves.

Two are especially important—

1. A *question of privilege* is a motion that would secure to the assembly or to any of its members some right, whether of comfort, dignity, or repute. When a member has “stated his question of privilege,” the chairman may either act on it as a suggestion, put it as a motion, or rule it out (sub-

ject to appeal) as not properly a question of privilege.

2. The motion *to adjourn* is one that would bring the meeting to a close. It is undebatable and yields only to a motion to fix the time for reassembling.

This sketch of the most serviceable motions should fix in mind the indispensable minimum of parliamentary order. The student will find the whole subject adequately yet clearly presented in F. M. Gregg's handy little *Parliamentary Law* (Ginn).

HOW TO KEEP THE MEETING ABOVE "CROWD-MINDEDNESS"

In using the rules of order the first consideration is to keep the meeting "crew-minded" when it tends to get "crowd-minded." Members of the same organization are in a sense "all in the same boat." Disagreements among them should not become rancors that impair their morale as a crew. The "crew-minded" speaker remembers that his opponent on to-day's issue may be his ally on to-morrow's—if the debate leaves no personal sore spots. His maxim of attack, therefore, will be "measures, not men," and this means dealing with the measures' effects, not with their sponsors' motives. A whole meeting so minded will keep debate going in a mood of reflection where it would otherwise run to gusts of raw feeling.

Every student of public opinion in the making should learn to recognize "crowd-mindedness." It is not something that necessarily results from congregating. A large concourse of people can take action and express feeling collectively without becoming a crowd. So long as its members preserve the sense of responsibility in their thinking, their assembling is an enlightened social resource for stimulus and co-operation. A crowd is an aggregate of people that have lapsed to a psychic level of irresponsible thought and feeling. The controlling ideas and impulses at this level are no longer the higher factors of their minds but their common denominators. The steps by which crowd-mindedness comes about can be described somewhat as follows:—¹

1. Debate grows combative. Laughter ceases to be good-natured, and applause becomes a display of factional strength. As a partisan you lose the mood of testing statement by fact, and huddle for the protective indorsement of like-minded numbers.

2. Statements grow oracular. Noble-sounding generalities take the place of concrete explanation. Speakers pronounce their views with the unction of priests at a ritual. You are made to feel that the *prestige* of opinions is what counts, not their practical working out.

3. Ideas become "compulsions." As argument

¹ For a fuller discussion see Everett D. Martin: *The Behavior of Crowds*, chap. II. "How Crowds are Formed."

drops away from appeal to facts it establishes an appeal to emotionally charged symbols. Ideas that sum up popular prejudices and take form in cant phrases—such as “wage slavery,” “right to strike,” “square deal,” “hundred per cent”—begin to act as incantations, and under their spell the assembly’s thinking drifts away from outside realities. If you happen to “come to” and look critically at the meeting, you feel that it has become strangely self-sufficient, that its convictions rest on the illusion that *what thrills so many must be so!*

Obviously there is no greater danger for the labor movement, nor indeed for democracy—for crowd-mindedness is not the frailty of any one class—than that its group-decisions should take place under sub-rational influences. Against such, labor must develop its own “*intelligenza*”: men and women who can preserve their critical powers at all times and free their assembly-groups from crowd-hypnotisms. Practically what you can do towards this end can be put into two maxims:—

1. *Avert a premature clash of will.* If the issue is a contentious one, the motion that brings it to a decision should be staved off until everything possible has been done to create a better understanding on it. This you can bring about by moving “that the body resolve itself into a *committee of the whole* to consider”—the issue. A vote taken in committee of the whole does not bind the action of the body, so

that the members—feeling less to be at stake in the vote—argue with less strain and combativeness. The same effect can be secured in the regular body (especially when small) by moving to consider the question “informally” before proceeding to act “formally.” If the issue is already before the body, you can avert a rash and heated settlement by one of the postponing motions—either “to postpone to a certain time,” or (if the issue seems confused) “to refer to a committee.”

2. *Ask to have cant phrases translated.* High-sounding and crowd-compelling formulas can thus be promptly deflated, and the meeting disposed once more to “get down to brass tacks.”

The chairman has special chances to keep the meeting “crew-minded” if he plays his rôle as a true helmsman in stormy debate. He can disallow “questions of privilege” when they begin to be used merely as a way of heckling. When a speech has contained remarks likely to cause a miscarriage of its essential idea by stirring personal pique, he can avert a speech of recrimination by interjecting a courteous comment that sets the personal reflections aside. His privilege of offering at any stage of a debate a summary of the arguments thus far, gives opportunity for stating them in terms that touch off no crowd-reactions.

HOW TO KEEP DEBATE PROGRESSIVE

When the matter at stake in a motion is a simple one, the debate upon it can easily be concentrated on two or three essential points until everybody feels prepared to dispose of them at one vote. For example, when it is moved before a Central Labor Union to send a delegate to a national convention, the points at stake may be simply the loss in self-respect if the body is unrepresented, and the cost in money that is needed for other purposes. The speakers can say all that is called for on both points in almost any order without leaving a confused total impression of "backing and filling."

But when the matter at stake is more complex, the meeting needs deliberators who know how to dispose of its sub-issues one at a time, and in some progressive order. For example, if the resolution before a Central Labor body is for the establishment of a co-operative retail store, the debate upon it would have four or five essential points to deal with. How can the speaking be kept from scattering among all these points without settling any one?

A clear-headed member can do much here simply by keeping tabs on the inevitable "phases" of such a question as this. Every question of policy (as Chapter IV has shown) gets its real issues determined not by what happens to be said—which may prove irrelevant or unimportant—but by the vital interests involved in it. The proposed policy must

correct, in the existing state of things, features that from the point of view of these interests are felt to be evils, lacks, or drawbacks. The issues, therefore, can always be expressed as pros and cons about these "evils."

For example, the proposal that a Central Labor Union shall establish a co-operative store is inevitably a proposal to deal with the following "evils, lacks, or drawbacks":—

- a. The unnecessarily high cost of various necessities of life.
- b. The need of patronage for union label goods.
- c. The doubts of some members as to labor's competency for business management.
- d. The fears of others as to any form of "collectivism."

When expressed in terms of such "drawbacks" the issues will give always three "phases," and sometimes five, to the whole question under debate.

The three inevitable phases are:—

1. What existing "evils" does the proposal deal with?
2. Will the proposed plan remove them?
3. Will it incidentally bring in worse "evils"?

If the opponents of the plan have a strong case in their answers on these phases, no others need arise. Otherwise they must offer a substitute plan, and the question will get two further phases:—

4. Will the opponents' substitute plan remove the existing "evils"?
5. Will it (in turn) bring in worse "evils"—
 - (a) than the existing ones? (b) than those incidental to the proposed plan?

Here you have, then, a blank scheme of the questions which must get definite answers if the whole debate is to get anywhere. By following the debate with notes taken on five large cards (or on paper ruled into five columns), one for each expected "phase," you can check up what is said on the essential points. On the first, third, and (when a substitute plan is offered) the fifth cards or columns will be noted the alleged "evils" that give the crucial issues of the whole question. On all the cards or columns can be noted the pros and cons for each issue, so that after a number of speeches you have a sort of audit as to how each issue stands.

Make it your contribution to the debate at this point to state how the issues stand and to ask for an informal vote on the one most discussed so that debate can move on to the next.

Two parliamentary motions are serviceable to move debate along:—

The motion *to amend by dividing* the question averts a scattered debate by putting the issues before the meeting in serial order.

The motion *for the previous question* becomes proper when the speakers begin to repeat arguments

already offered, with mere differences of wording.

The chairman of the meeting should take the responsibility of acting as a monitor upon the debate's progress. He can—with better grace than other members—save the debate from time-consuming irrelevancies. He can check what Graham Wallas calls "the undialectical speaker": the prominent person who talks because he has to say something, not because he has something to say; the man of one idea who has to get it "off his chest"; the barker on the wrong scent. He can save time by making informal rulings—especially on amendments—instead of putting every suggestion to debate and vote. Most chairmen waste the assembly's time by obliging it to act on every trifling point. This they do from a fear of getting criticized as "dictatorial," forgetting that the assembly can halt dictatorship at any time by appealing from the decision of the chair.

HOW TO HARMONIZE MAJORITY RULE WITH MINORITY RIGHTS

Majorities can play the tyrant as well as officials. And a majority vote on any question is dearly got if it leaves an aggrieved and uncoöperative minority. This often happens not because the majority view is in itself unsympathetic to the opposed considerations, but because its expression is ill thought out and seems less amenable to agreement than it is intended to be.

The student of this book should have resources for such situations. Your own speaking will take form under the influence of your ideal of bringing the whole meeting towards a consensus. Where possible, you will make committee-work prepare the way for agreements. You will make the most of the committee of the whole. And in debate you will put your mind upon the wording of motions and amendments.

It is in amending that you have special parliamentary openings to invite a consensus. Motions are apt to be badly worded. Indeed one shrinks from reflecting how badly all our social machinery is "gummed" by sheer crude English. It would pay any organization to provide cards and pencils for its members at all meetings and to require that motions be put into writing before they are offered. In any case you can do much to get factions together by suggesting tentative wordings for an amendment before getting it formally put. You thus draw criticism from both sides at a stage when both are in a more critical than contentious mood.

When chairman you have special chances to play a harmonizing rôle. You have the right to decline to entertain slovenly motions and amendments. You must recognize speakers on both sides impartially, but you can also prod the "silent partners"—telling them to speak up now or hold their peace if defeated. You can disallow any effort to coerce the meeting's

action by parliamentary technicalities. The meeting will always back you up against that pest, the man who tries to domineer by his superior knowledge of "the rules." And at any point you are free to remind the debaters of overlooked alternatives.

You have now learned all that this little book can teach about joining in public discussion. But you can learn immensely more from experience—from your hearers. "Speaking is but a dialogue with an audience," whose responses, though silent and often subconscious, are your instructive cues.

In your further learning you can also be a teacher. By treating your hearers not as an audience but as collaborators you will bring the spirit of social science into the thinking and speaking of your group. You will be a technician of democracy.

SUGGESTED EXERCISE

In order to fix in mind the business-like forms of deliberative procedure, let the class give fifteen minutes of each meeting to parliamentary drill. Every member should preside, each holding the chair until he has made an error, upon which he surrenders it to the next, and so on.

THE END



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